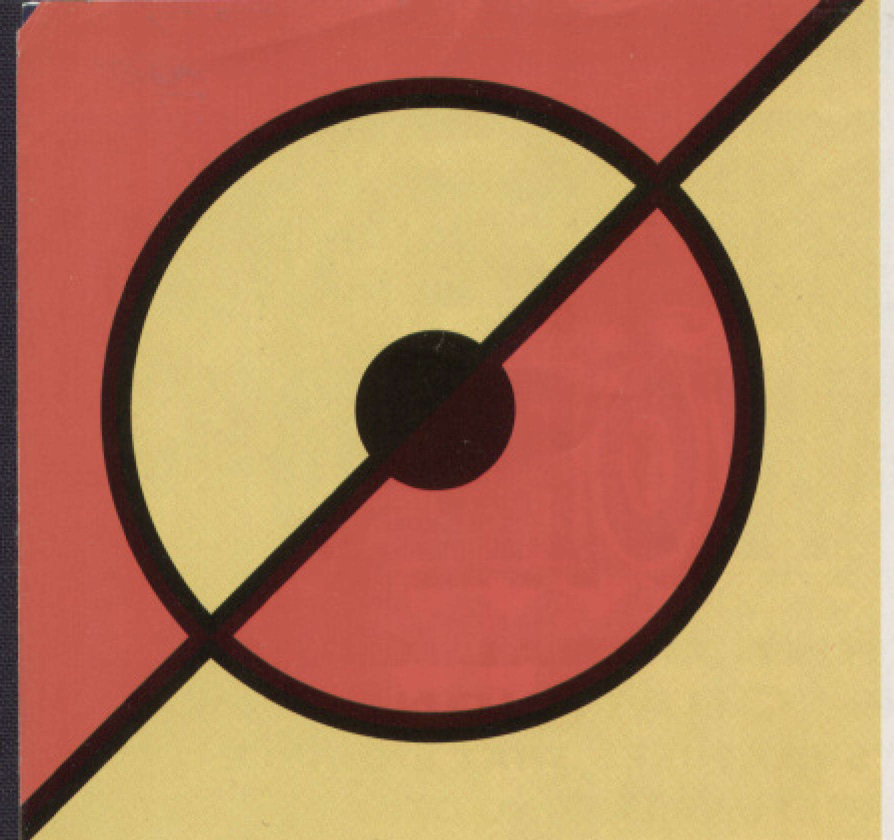
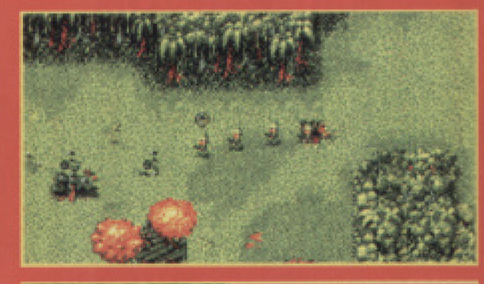

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This summer's Hollywood blockbuster roars onto the Amiga! EXCLUSIVE game and movie previews inside!
SIZZLING REVIEWS! Syndicate, Gunship 2000, Dune 2 and Ishar 2 are just a few of this month's hot new games!



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Distribution
BBC Frontline Ltd
Park Road
Peterborough PE1 2TR
Telephone: (0733) 555161

Subscriptions & Back issues
PO Box 500
Leicester LE99 OAA
Telephone: (0858) 410510
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The One is produced with Apple Macintosh Desktop Publishing, using QuarkXpress, Adobe Illustrator, Theatrics, Adobe Photoshop and more. Film output by Team, 105-109 Oxford Street, London W1, and PrePress, 124-132 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1R. Printed by Passmore International.

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SYNDICATE............84



Bullfrog's world inside your computer bursts onto the Amiga in a blaze of burning bodies and gore galore. Find out just how excellent it is in our attractive four page review.

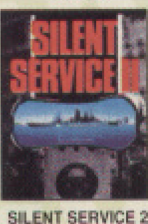


STARDUST...............44

Stardust is certainly one to watch out for in the near future. Gasp in amazement as we discover exactly how far the Amiga can be pushed in our in-depth Work In Progress.

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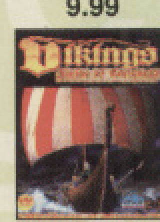


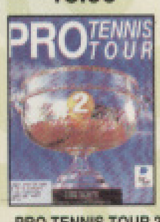
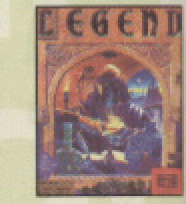
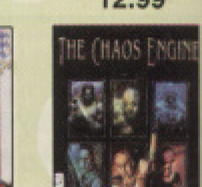








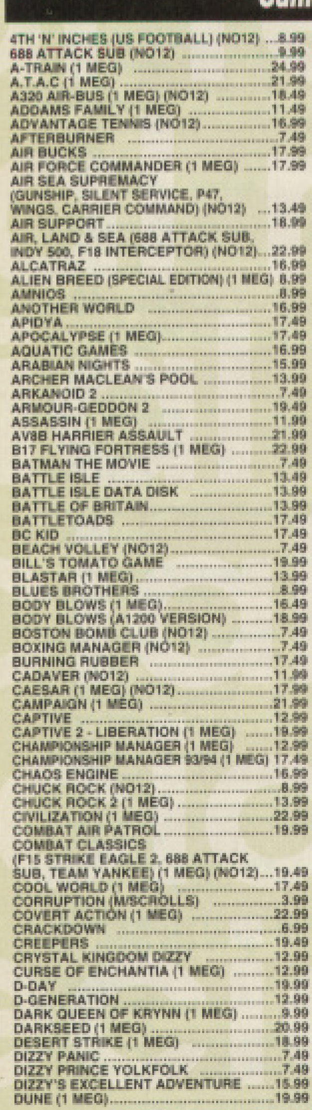




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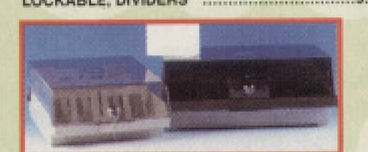
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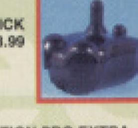
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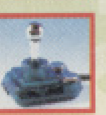
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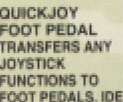


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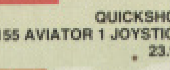


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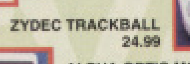
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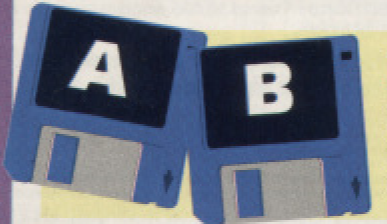
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BOOT SECTOR



LOADING YOUR DISKS

(1) Pick the disk of your choice on insert it into your drive. (2) Turn on your Amiga and wait in sweaty anticipation. (3) Pick the game you want from the menu and press the appropriate key. (4) Allow yourself to be carried away to a magical land far away from here.



DISK A

CANNON FODDER

Virgin Games

Guns and gore galore is what you were promised and that's what you're gonna get with this three-level demo of Sensible Software's latest, Cannon Fodder. As of this moment, you're in command of fifteen soldiers and it's your job to lead them through enemy territory shooting everything that moves and anything that doesn't. The only objective here is to stay alive long enough to kill every enemy unit in existence.

Controlling your happy - if suicidal - troops couldn't be easier if I did it for you myself. By moving the cursor around the playing area with your mouse, you can view the furthest parts of the screen still containing your men. Clicking the left button will send them marching towards the cursor, while clicking the right button will shoot the targeted area. You can split your team into up to three separate units by highlighting the names to be used one by one then clicking on the 'flag' icon. You can now swap between the teams by clicking on the relevant 'flag'.

Enemy units hide camouflaged in the undergrowth and can spring out at any time so be ready - and don't worry, you can't shoot your own men. Any crates found in the battle area should be collected with all haste as they contain the prize of grenades and bazookas. These can be used by highlighting the chosen weapon icon (which also shows how many are available). Then move the cursor over your target and hold down the right mouse button. While you hold this down, tap the left button and away the missile goes to end in an almighty explosion. Grenades only travel a limited distance but the bazooka will cover larger distances more accurately.

Be careful when blowing up enemy huts with other items near by, as some chain reactions can occur after major explosions - of course, this can be used to your advantage depending on where the bad guys are standing at the time. Another sick thing that Mr David Upchurch has become very proficient at is shooting the bad guys just enough to leave them spurting blood and screaming on the floor. Then, if you're feeling kind enough, you can put them out of their misery... with a couple of grenades. Ah ha-ha-ha. Try to avoid shooting crates as live ammo isn't known to react well to such acts. You'll be glad to know that you can blow up trees and inanimate objects too. Yeah.

The final level takes you to the Arctic wastes where you will have to contend with fast-moving enemy troopers on skis - not to mention snowmen with nasty smiles. On all scenarios you can travel through any water encountered but it does slow you down considerably and also reduces your shooting ability. You've probably loaded this up by now, so run along and enjoy some serious blood-spitting carnage. Fun for all the kiddies courtesy of The One.



In true The One tradition, Matt Broughton holds his breath and dives headfirst into the deep and gorgeous pile of quality demos on offer. So go grab a snorkel, grab your disks, and join him below.



DISK A
CANNON FODDER



DISK B
GLOBAL GLADIATORS, F1 CHALLENGE, BALDY

DISK B

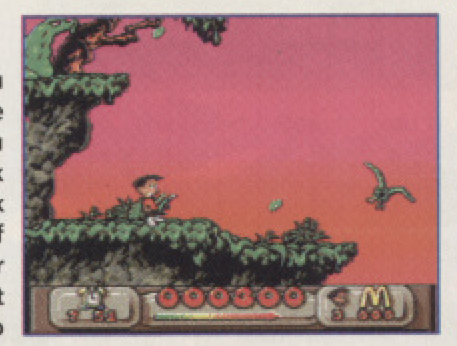
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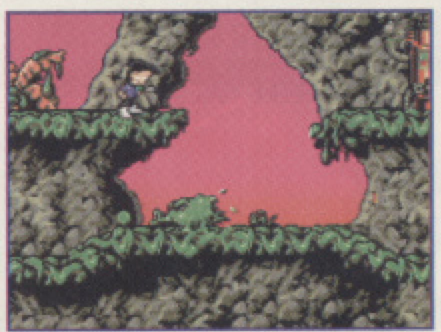
Virgin Games

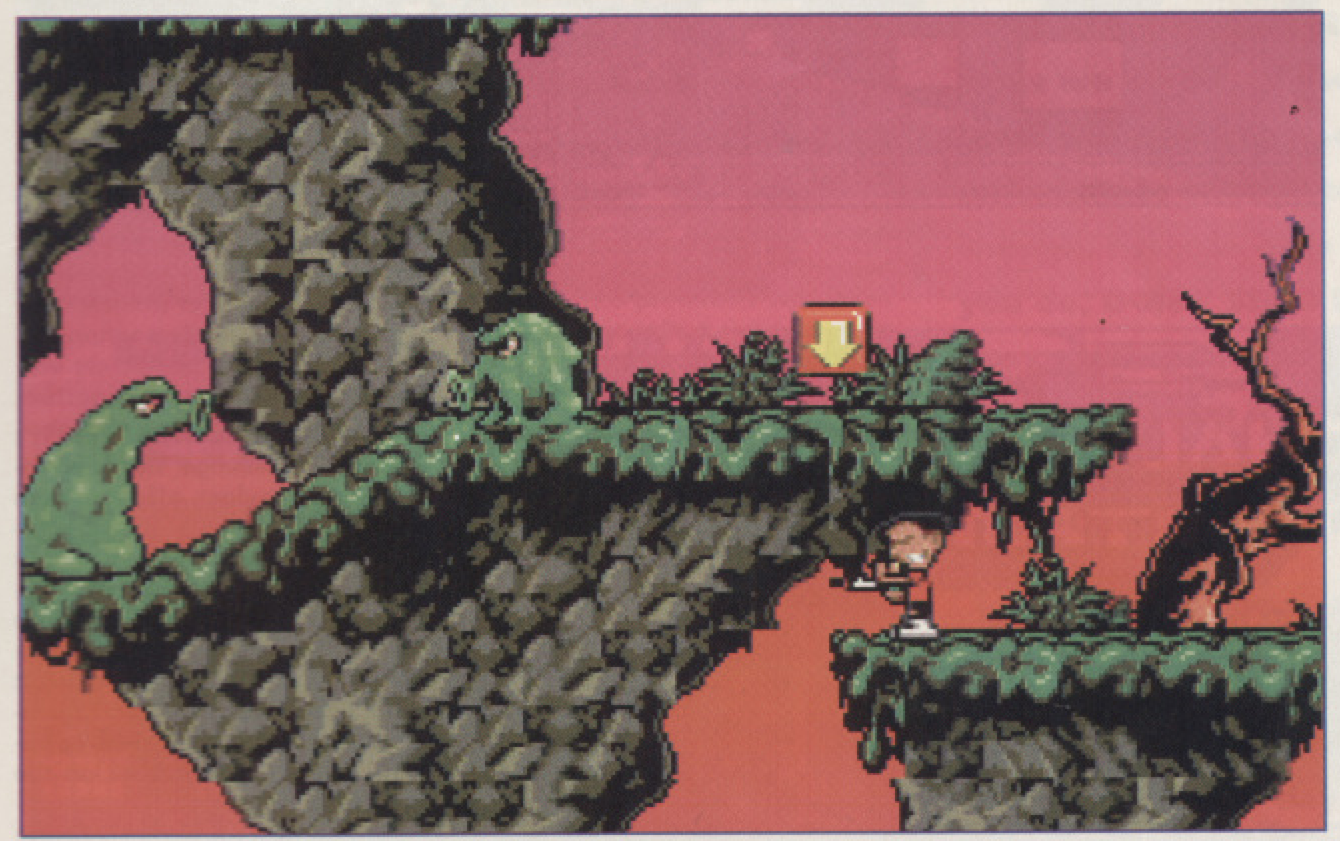
This has probably happened to you many times before, so it won't come as much of a surprise when I tell you the story behind our cover disk which involves two lads called Mick and Mack. It's a tale of woe, so if you're feeling a little depressed or low you might want to skip the next bit and go to 'What you have to McDo'. You see, one day while sitting in their favourite McDonalds restaurant, reading their favourite comic, Mack exclaims "Wow! The gladiators are way awesome!"

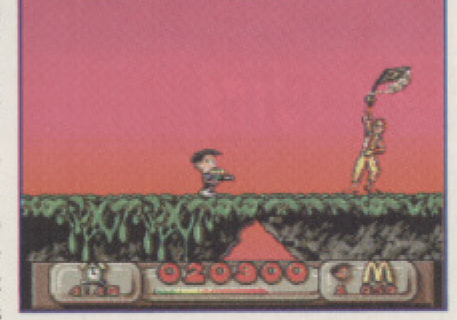
"Yea!" replies Mick, "being a gladiator would be a blast!". With this, Ronald McDonald himself appears beside the boys and, with a McSprinkle of McMagic McDust (I made that bit up actually), he grants the boys their wish. You have to wonder exactly what they wished for, because they end up in a world that is filled with spitting gob monsters and bubbling pools of mucus.

Yes, as you may well have McGuessed, you get to be Mick or Mack in this little McGem supplied to us by our good McFriends Virgin. (Look. you can McCut that out right away. - Ed.)









WHAT YOU HAVE TO McDO...

First things first. Go to the option menu and pick who you want to be in this lovely phlegm-influenced platformer. There's no real difference between Mick and Mack apart from appearance, but use the option screen to choose this plus difficulty level and sound preferences. Now get going and enjoy yourself.

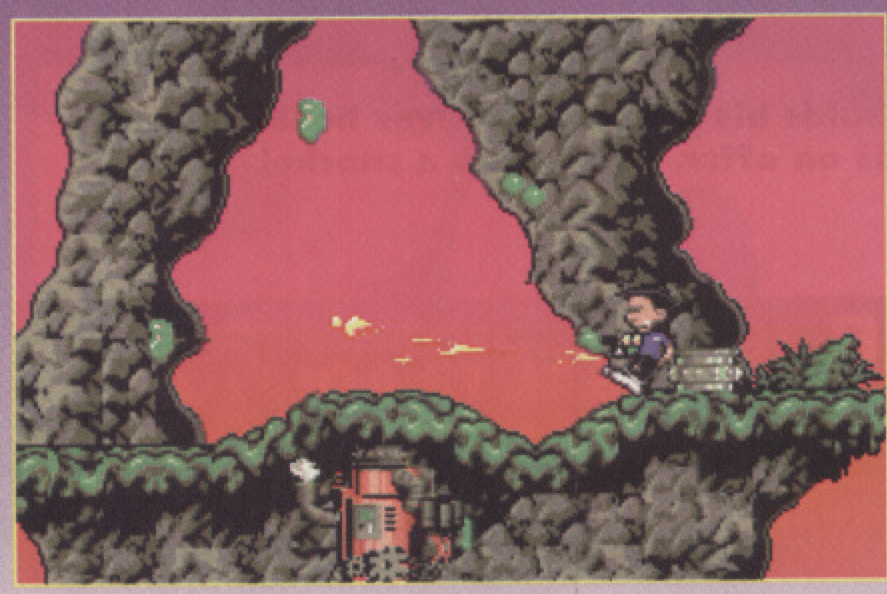
The object of this demo is to collect a set number of McDonalds arches within a time limit and then make for the exit at the far right to meet with Ronnie boy. Even though you're up against a time limit, it's worth leaving your character alone for a minute or two just to see him go through his set pieces.

The thing, or should I say things, that haven't been mentioned yet are the weird and wonderful slime-oriented monsters that are out to stop you. They fly, they spit, they'll even roll at you in an attempt to thwart (good word that) your efforts. Of course you're not helpless - on your back you'll find the latest in bogey-bashing weaponry, and a few good hits should soon have those bogies licked (Yuck!).

Your energy is shown as an arrow at the bottom of the screen, and one of your three lives will be lost when it's all gone (surprise, surprise). When this happens, you'll be returned to the very beginning of the level unless you've collected any restart pointers - boxes labelled with a downward arrow.

If you pull down, you'll get to see a bit more of the screen than normal, which is very useful when it comes to avoiding slime pools. Another thing to watch out for is the gun recoil that can push you backwards until you fall off the platform that you are on, quite often into the aforementioned slime!

Dotted around the platforms you will find small silver jump pads. Jump on top of these and you will be propelled upward to





previously 'unreachable' heights. Push up on the joystick at the apex of your jump to get higher still. Look out for platforms that melt under pressure, and lastly, while you're leaping around wildly, look out for any bits of empty space that seem to sparkle... say no more. Right that's it, now go and have McFun.

It's time for the 'Did I Mention This?' Small Print

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F1 CHALLENGE

Team 17

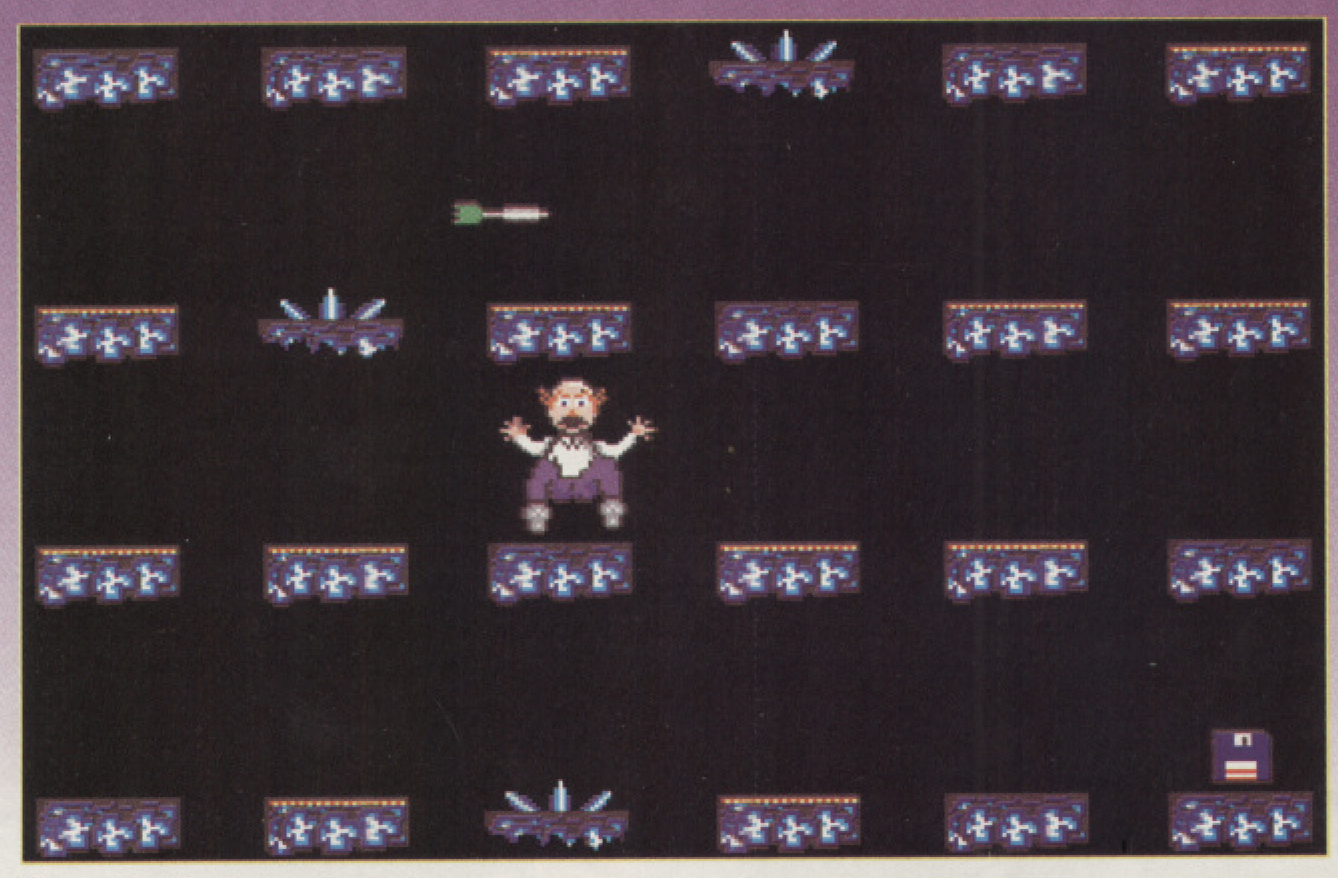
Get your motor running cause it's time for F1 Challenge. This soon-to-be-released budget offering from Team 17 will feature 17 different circuits, and we've managed to get hold of one of these so that you - yes, you, the reader - can experience the delights of bombing around a track at 300km/h. In this One-circuit demo you get to race against twenty-two computer-controlled opponents as they burn rubber on the grid. Apparently.

Controlling your motor is simple - hold down Fire to accelerate, pull back to break and steer with your joystick. Told you it was simple, didn't I? Avoid collisions at all costs as not only will you loose valuable time and position but as your car becomes more damaged - as shown on screen - the more it's performance will drop. If the damage rating reaches 100%, the race is over for you. Hitting other cars isn't the only



worry as any off-road driving will also damage the car - and there are plenty of trees and signs to get in your way. You can decide to make a pit stop should your car become badly crippled, but this again can loose you time and position in the race.

The top of the screen displays all the relevant information - position, speed, lap time and damage - plus the best recorded times so far. This circuit is based in Britain and, to add to the realism, it rains every now and then. When this happens, take it easy on the track or you could find yourself spinning out of control, wasting valuable seconds, not to mention looking silly and unprofessional.



BALDY

Complete PD game!

Every one likes a laugh - just look at the England football team - and this little game had us chuckling quietly to ourselves, so we've decided to allow it onto your screen so that you might delight in the legend that is Baldy. Baldy has a problem - once you see him you'll know it's true - but this problem involves a large number of disks that the poor non-haired personage has lost. It's down to you to work your way across twenty levels in an attempt to help Baldy retrieve them.

Each screen contains twenty-five platforms which Baldy - that's you that is - has to jump across in an effort to collect his discs. The only way to move vertically from one row of platforms to the next is by use of teleporter pads that are on some of the platforms. A press on the Fire button will toggle Baldy between one teleporter pad and the pad directly below or above - if you can picture The Brady Bunch, you're almost there.

Some of the pads have nasty sharp vicious pointy things on them, which should be avoided at all times as they'll cost you one of Baldy's five lives. To make things even more wild and hatstand there are missiles that fly across some of the rows that also have to be avoided unless you want Baldy to die - and, let's be frank, who could enjoy such a thing?

Only one disk appears at a time and this must be collected before the next one appears - anything else would be too easy. After you've collected the required number, the next level will be presented with even more discs to collect and even more crazy wacky obstacles to be avoided. Hey, are you ready for my side-splitting bald joke...? No, on second thoughts I don't think so.

IF YOUR DISK DOESN'T LOAD THEN READ THIS!!!

Oh, faulty disk, eh? Please accept our humblest of apologies but due to the amount of disks we duplicate there's bound to be at least one duff one and you were unfortunate enough to pick it. Never mind, though, because help is at hand. Whatever you do, DON'T SEND IT TO US - we're too busy writing the mag to replace them ourselves. Just pop it in an envelope with a SAE to the value of 28p and send it to -

The One Coverdisk Returns,
PC Wise,
Dowlais Top Business Park,
Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil,
Mid Glamorgan CF48 2YY.

and within a few days a working copy will be winging its way your-house-wards. If you think you have a problem which you think can be solved over the dog and bone, you can call the chaps at PC Wise on their Helpline: (0685) 350505 between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm on weekdays.

Made for budding *Nigels...*



The Logic 3 FreeWheel™

Can you imagine Nigel Mansell using a joystick to control his car around a high-speed track? Probably not. That's why we came up with the Freewheel. Just plug it into your computer joystick port and experience the real sensation of driving!

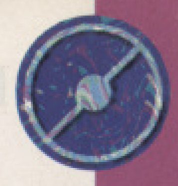
* Suitable for all types of driving and flying games * Uses unique angle-sensitive switches
* Extra-long connector cable. * Ideal companion for the QJ Footpedal Controller (SRP £24.99)
* Does not need to be mounted or fixed to a surface * Following versions available now:—

FW 111 - Digital Freewheel for Amiga/ST/C64 etc - £29·99 inc VAT
FW 123 - Analog Freewheel for Amiga - £39·99 inc VAT
FW 223 - Analog Freewheel for IBM PC - £39·99 inc VAT
FW 311 - Digital Freewheel for Sega Megadrive - available Autumn 93
FW 411 - Digital Freewheel for Super Nintendo - available Autumn 93

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NEWS

WHAT A BLOW!

Well, here it is - your first look at Body Blows 2. Details are scarce at the moment as to what the game will be like, but obviously we can presume it'll be another beat-'em-up in the same vein as the first game. This time the action appears to take place in space, with various alien types competing for the Intergalactic Body Blows Trophy or something. More news nearer the game's release date later in the year.





DOMARK DRIVE OFF WITH F1 LICENCE!

Lotus, Ferrari, NigelMansell, the Lombard RAC Rally... There may already be enough driving games on the market to clog up the M25, but Domark reckons that its addition to the starting grid has that little extra something that will make it stand out from the pack.

The reason? Rather than simply sign up a single driver or racing team, Domark has gone for the whole kit and caboodle by picking up the licence to the entire Formula One circus, and is now set to produce a series of official F1 games for the '93 and '94 seasons.

The first game to spring from this arrangement, the economically-titled F1, has already been in development for more than two years and has been tested by professional drivers throughout its development. The game allows the player access to all currently participating teams and drivers, and can be played out over any one of the 12 Formula One tracks.

Commenting for Domark, managing director Mark Strachan says: "This is the most important game that Domark has ever published. It's a winner on all counts - the licence is unbeatable and the program is superb."

No exact release date has been scheduled as yet, but it's hoped that development will have finished in time for a Christmas release.

SOFTWARE CENSORSHIP?



The day when you have to bring proof of your age to your local software shop when you want to buy a game may not be too far in the future, if current moves within the business result in publishers putting their games forward for approval and certification in a similar system to that used to rate videos. While most games are harmless, the possibilities offered to unscrupulous developers by the full-motion video capabilities of CD look likely to lead to the powers that be in the games business placing their own ratings on games before forced to do so by the Government.

Much of this proposed action has been brought about by a recent furore in the tabloid press which was stirred by the release of Sega's fairly tame CD game Night Trap. This led to calls from all sorts of ignorant parties for games to be rated and kept out of the hands of children.

As the law currently stands, video games are not subject to classification of any sort. They are, however, covered (albeit briefly) by the Video Recordings Act of 1984. Given the hoo-haa, it's likely that some sort of classification system will be in operation before the end of the year. It is, however, highly unlikely that this will run along the same lines as the 'U', 'PG', '15' and '18' system used for films and video.

WHAT DIDDY DID

Now that they've had time to decide just exactly what they're going to do with all of the money that Ocean has promised them (see last issue's News), the boys from Digital Image Design have put their minds back to getting a couple of new games ready for release later this year.

The first of the two new releases expected from the Runcorn-based crew between now and Christmas will be TFX, a flight and fight simulator set above a massive 3D landscape and featuring an experimental combat 'plane (although D.I.D. claims that any resemblance to its previous flight sim, F-29, is purely coincidental).



The game is expected to hit the digital airways in mid-September and should be accompanied in-store by a 'Making Of TFX' video documentary (which will be presented by Bad Influence's miniature spiky blonde starlet, Violet Berlin).

Never ones to meddle with a successful format, Digital's next release also harks back to a game of old, as Inferno: The Odyssey Continues is billed as an 'epic' space exploration adventure.

Both games will appear in A1200-specific form only - and due to their massive scale, it's thought unlikely that they'll ever trickle down to the less capable 500/600 format.

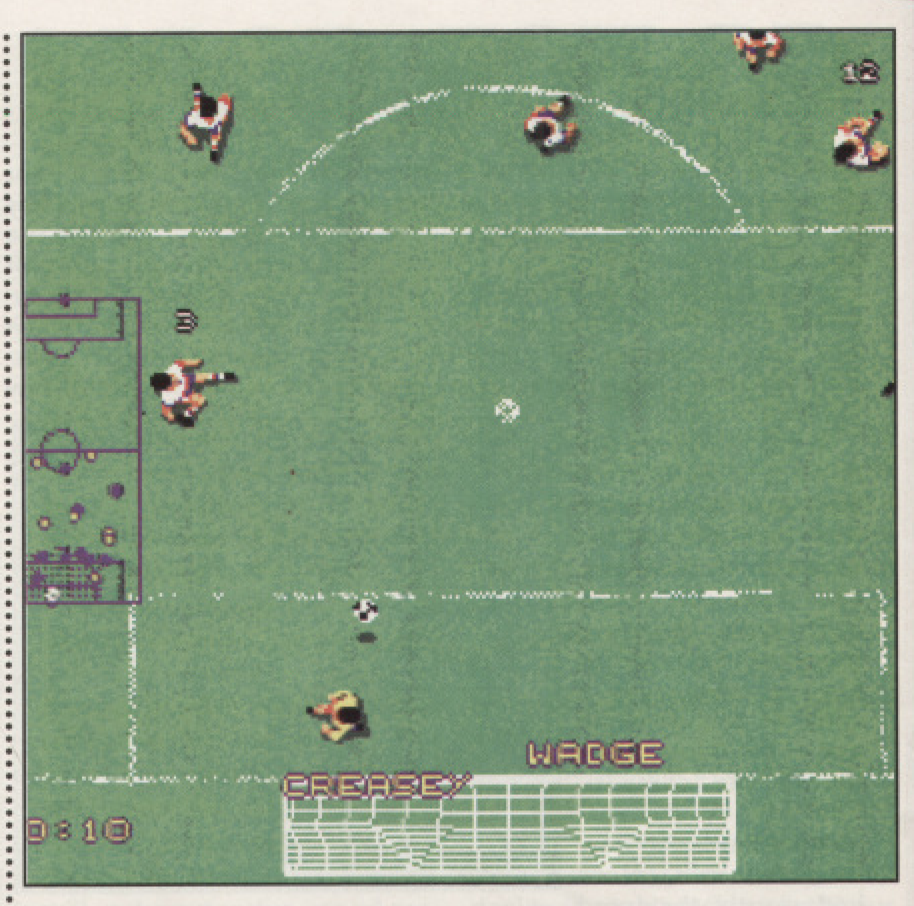


KRISALIS GO MAD-CHESTER!

Well, who would have believed it? Following Manchester United's long overdue confirmation as the best football team in the country, Krisalis has shocked the games world with its intention to release yet another game based on the exploits of the Red Devils.

Krisalis has already enjoyed success with its two previous Manchester United games, Manchester United and Manchester United Europe, and now expects to follow suit with Manchester United: Premier League Champions.

The game is expected to hit the shelves by September, and there will be more news and screenshots of the game in action in a forthcoming issue. Now, anyone care to bet against Manchester United: Champions of Europe this time next year?



NEXT...



OCEAN FOOTY CHANGES STRIP!

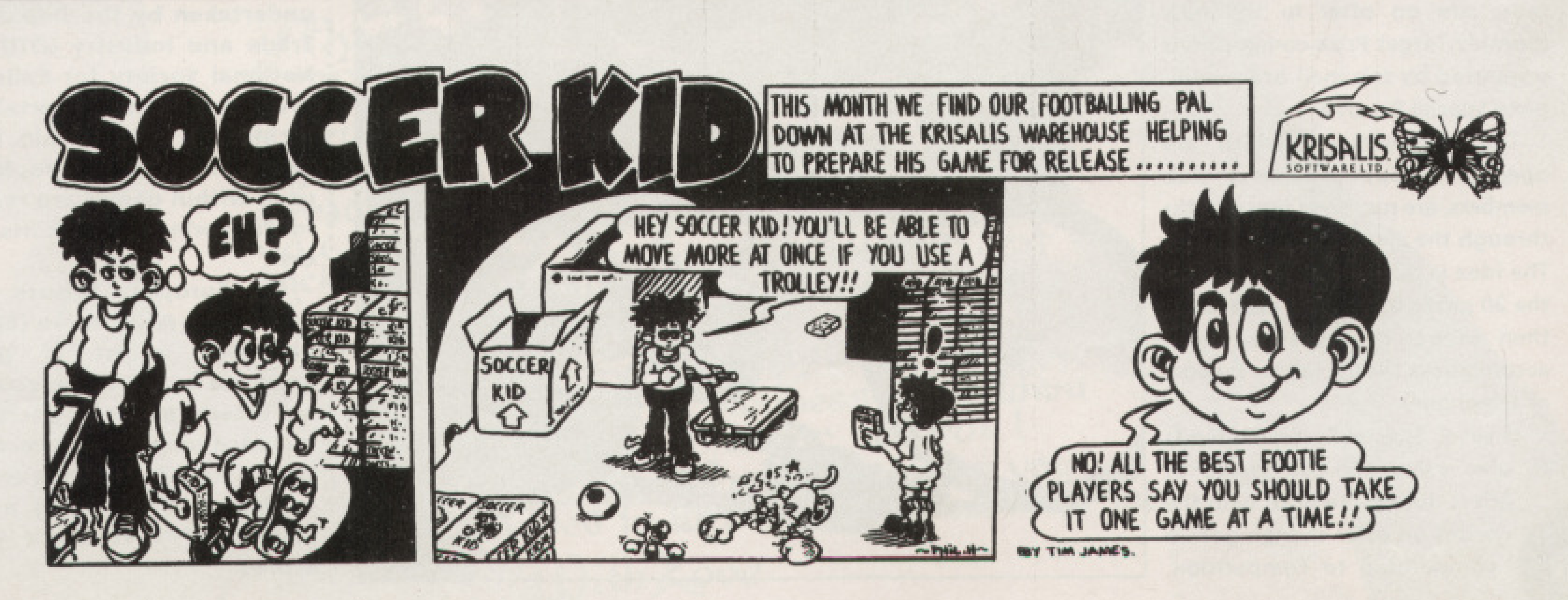
Manchester United may have brought the inaugural Premier League trophy back home in a blaze of glory last May, but this obviously hasn't impressed fellow Mancunians Ocean, who have dropped the Premier League moniker from the forthcoming football game in order to give it a more European flavour.

The game, due for release at the beginning of next season, will now go by the title of Super League Manager, and will incorporate teams from all of the major European leagues.

"Everybody's talking about the possibility of a combined European league," says Ocean's Simon Alty, "so we've decided to jump the gun by allowing Amiga users to take part in a cross-Continental league even before the real clubs and players can."

The game's format will allow players to either take part in any of the major domestic competitions - the Premier League, the Bundesliga, Serie A and so on - or to combine favourite teams from each into a single star-studded tournament.

Super League Manager will be available in October for A500/600 machines. There is no A1200-specific version planned.



GO FOR GOAL!

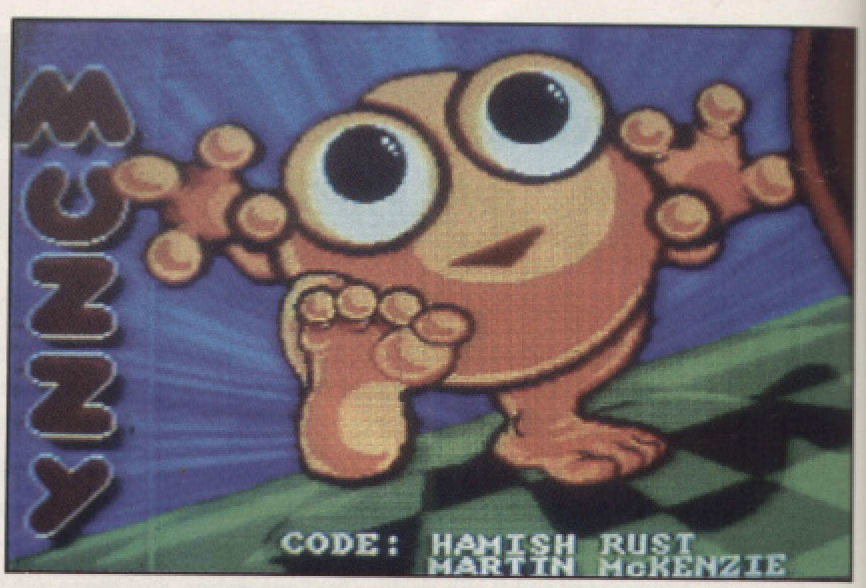
Fancy yourself as a bit of a soccer hot-shot? Well here's your chance to prove yourself against the best, as Virgin Games has teamed up with the nationwide chain of Game shops to find the UK's greatest player of Dino Dini's new footie extravaganza, Goal!

The quest will take place at Game's 14 stores (including the newly-opened Sheffield emporium) every Thursday and Saturday between July and August and will culminate in a star-studded play-off - possibly at Game's Manchester shop - prior to the beginning of the new football season.



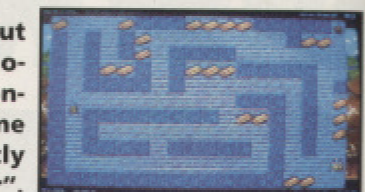
In all, 16 players will make it through from the heats to represent their local shop at the grand final. However, even if you don't make it through, there's a free joystick on offer to anyone who buys a copy of the game in one of the Game shops during the competition.

More details of how to enter and, more importantly, the grand prize (rumoured to be a trip to the States for next year's World Cup finals) are available now from your local Game store. So, get practising your footie skills and you might end up succeeding where Graham Taylor and his boys so dismally failed.



IT'S, er, MUZZY!

Is it an egg? Is it a frog? No, it's Muzzy, the cutesy hero of the first ever game from Amiga newcomer Far Out. Muzzy's eponymous debut is a puzzle game played against the clock over 72 levels, and is available now priced at £25.99.



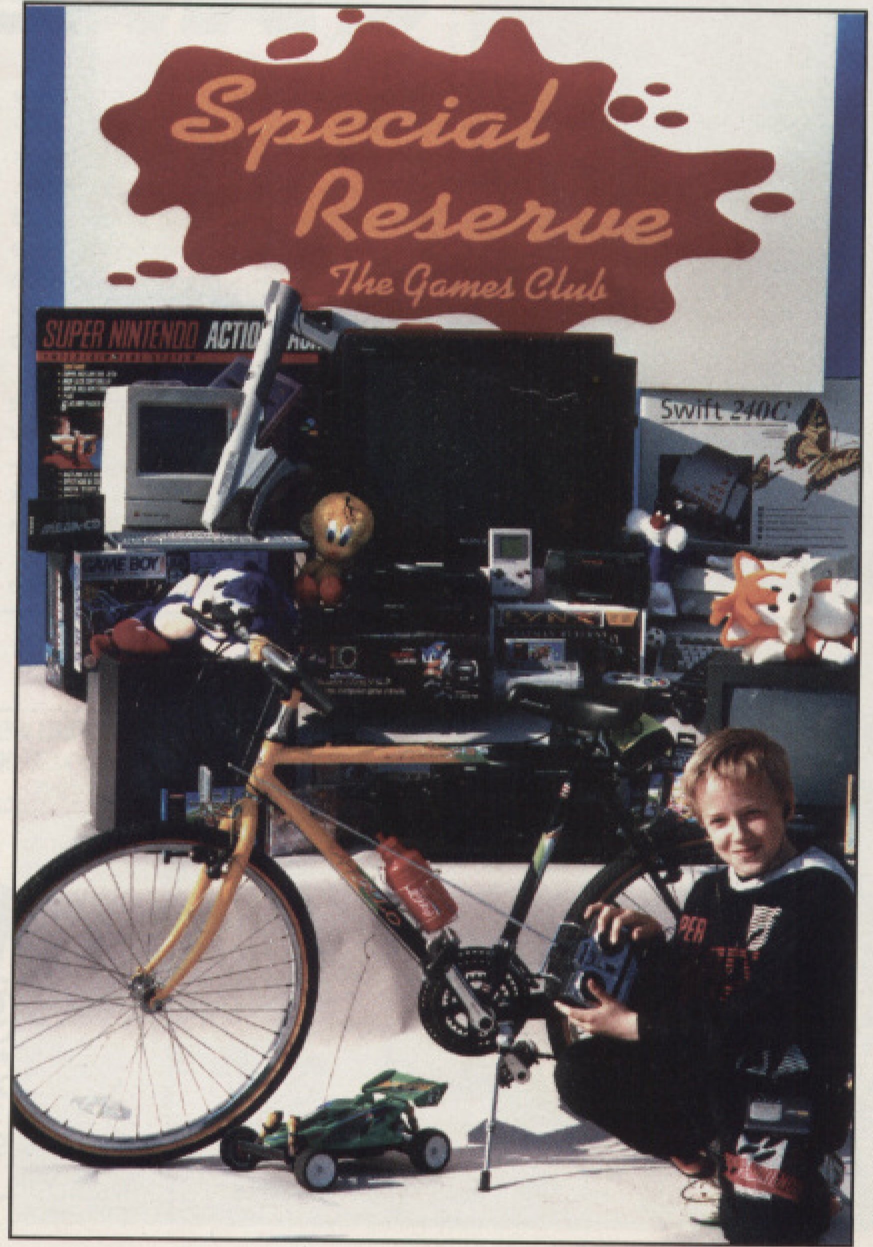
Future releases promised from Far Out include Cool J. Charlie (a Super Mario-style platform game) and the provisionally-titled Total Soccer, a footie game which Far Out's Jim Scott modestly describes as a "Sensible Soccer beater".

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Fancy a chance to win a new Amiga, a mountain bike, a Sony Discman or a radio controlled car? Well, all of these and more are on offer in the new monthly Target Prize competitions organised by top mail order company Special Reserve.

The competitions, which are open to all Special Reserve club members, are run every two months through the club's NRG magazine. The idea is to 'target' any three of the 20 prizes on offer in each issue, then answer the question which accompanies the list (either by post or telephone).

In total, Special Reserve intends to give away £60,000 worth of prizes during the year, with the prizes on offer changing from competition to competition.



GOVERNMENT LAUNCH INQUIRY INTO GAMES-RELATED EPILEPSY

Following the recent scare stories in the tabloid press regarding the possible link between computer games and epilepsy, the Government has decided to investigate the problem to determine whether games really do trigger attacks.

The study, which is being jointly undertaken by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the National Society for Epilepsy, will investigate whether certain camera techniques used within TV shows and commercials or graphic effects used within games are responsible for triggering epileptic fits in sufferers.

The European Leisure Software Publisher's Association (ELSPA) has produced a list of guidelines designed to reduce the possibility of an attack being triggered, these included playing for shorter spells, sitting further from the screen and, where possible, using a monitor instead of a standard television screen.

COMMODORE SLASH PRICES!

Commodore is putting the pressure on Sega and Nintendo with a series of price cuts across the Amiga range and a trade-in offer for the A1200 which brings the top-of-the-range machine to below £300 for the first time ever.

Following the cuts, which came into effect last month, the bare A600 now sells for £199.99, while the Wild, Weird and Wicked pack (which includes Push Over, Putty and MicroProse Grand Prix) now comes in at £229.99.

The biggest fall of all has been reserved for the A600 HD Epic pack (which includes a 600 with built-in hard drive and three games) which has dropped £150 to now sell at £349.99. The basic A1200 has dropped to £399.99.

Perhaps the best news of all though, is that Commodore has launched a new trade-in deal for the A1200, which means that owners of any 500 or 500+ model can now trade their machine in against a new 32-bit machine and receive a further £100 reduction.

The trade-in offer is for a limited period, and is only available through local independent computer shops.

IS CD-ROM A MIRAGE?

Mirage is to follow its instincts with the launch of a new in-house label, specifically set up to take advantage of the latest developments in CD-ROM and 3D rendering technology.

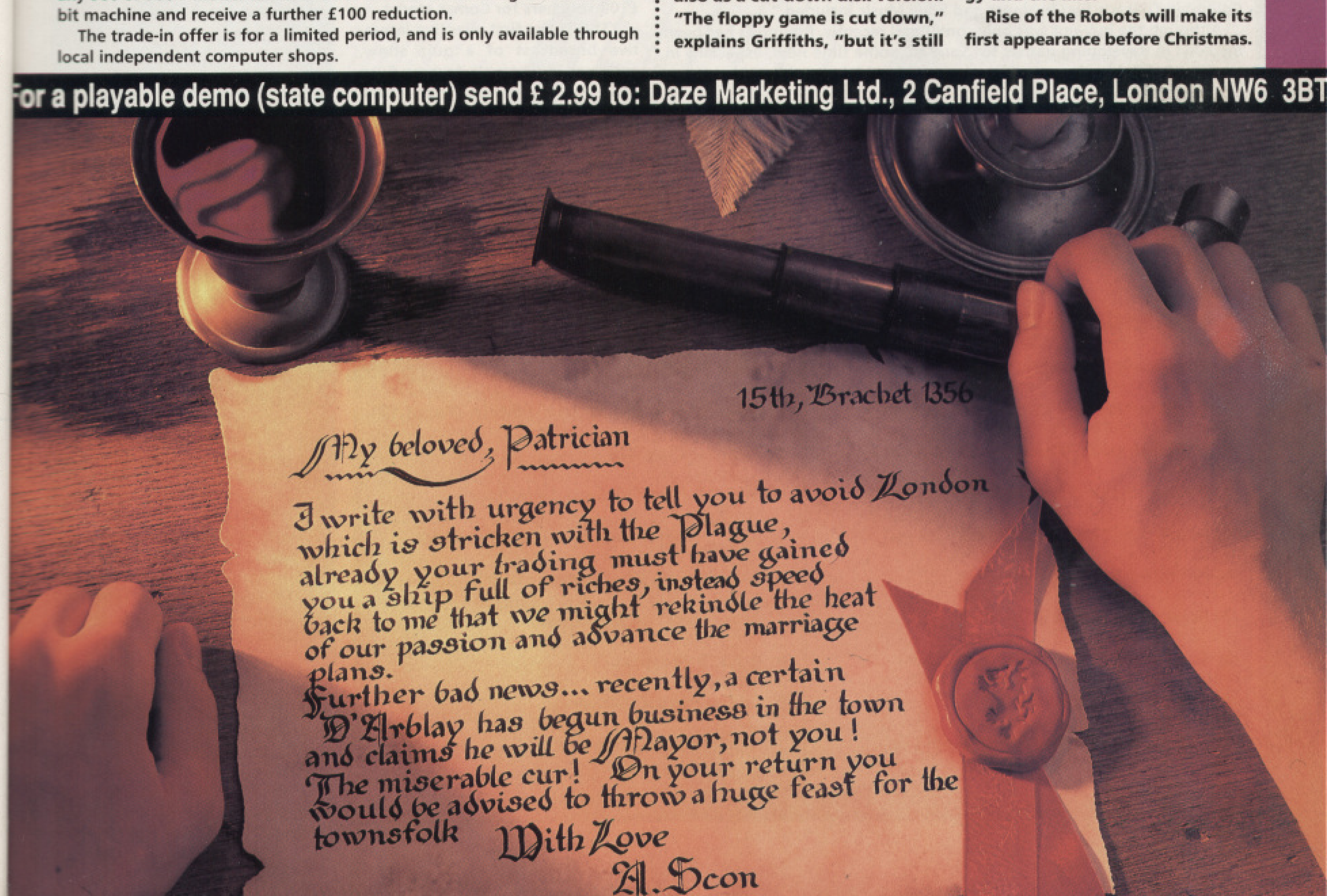
Instinct, an eight-man team of programmers, designers and artists, is headed up by former Bitmap Brother Sean Griffiths (of Magic Pockets infamy). The team is currently embroiled in the production of its first game, Rise of the Robots, an "interactive movie beat-'em-up" which will make extensive use of rendered images for its characters and backgrounds.

The game will initially be available in Amiga CD form, and also as a cut-down disk version. "The floppy game is cut down," explains Griffiths, "but it's still going to have to come on something like eight highly-compressed disks. We're going to make it hard disk installable to cut out some of the nonsense, but when you make use of cutting edge technology like this you have to make some sacrifices."

Following this initial release, Rise of the Robots will make a final appearance in 256-colour A1200 form.

On the subject of Instinct, Griffiths offers: "Setting up this new label is very much the next logical step from just being a games designer - taking charge of your own destiny and all of that. And it's really nice working with Mirage, as they share my own philosophies on future technology and the like."

Rise of the Robots will make its first appearance before Christmas.



LEMMINGS MOVE IN WITH GEORGE MICHAEL!

Those loveable green-haired idiots that we all get so much pleasure out of blasting to kingdom come have moved up in the world, as the giant Japanese Sony Corporation has bought Liverpool's largest software developer Psygnosis in a multi-million pound deal.

The new move, which has been rumoured since Sony's software division set up a small UK office late last year, was finally agreed last month.

However, despite the fact that the Lemmings will now move into a stable of stars which includes such names as George Michael and Sly Stallone, Psygnosis will continue to operate as a separate label, and is in no way considering abandoning the Amiga market for pastures new.

"Anyone that says that Psygnosis will lose its fire because of this deal is insane," says Psyggy boss Jonathan Ellis. "This deal just gives us the resources of a very large company - Columbia TriStar's film business and Sony Music included."

Although the buy-out was only completed recently, Psygnosis has been involved in developing games for Sony for some time now, especially in the CD-ROM field, where the Liverpool firm is widely considered to be one of the world leaders.

Psygnosis' first Amiga CD game, Microcosm, is reportedly imminent.

DON'T JUST SIT THERE!

The day when you'll be able to take part in 'interactive' television quiz shows is here right now... at least it is to 50,000 householders in the London area. Following a link-up between TV computer games specialist Hewland International (the company behind Channel 4's Gamesmaster and Sky's Games World) and cable television operator Videotron, the Wednesday edition of Games World now actually allows a select group of specially-equipped viewers to take part in the proceedings.

The show is Try Your Luck which features a number of multiple-choice questions related to games and gaming. Thanks to recent developments in 'interactive delivery', subscribers to Videotron's cable service can now join in the fun, answering questions by pressing the relevant button on their remote control handset. Viewers who answer correctly are rewarded with a code which entitles them to enter a weekly draw for £100 vouchers for Comet stores.

"This is the first ever live interactive broadcast of a quiz show," enthuses Videotron's Andrew Curry. "The fact that viewers can actually win prizes really enhances the excitement of the programme."

STRIPTEASERS

..A570 and CDTV users can now find the entire catalogue of CD software from a single source, as distribution firm Capri has just tied up a deal with Commodore to become the first operation to stock its full range. "We became aware that there are a considerable number of CDTV and A570 users out there who need a reliable source of software," says Capri's Richard Gandy, "and we aim to meet that need."...

...Following last month's news that Bad Influence is to return for a new season, exact dates have finally been announced. The new series of ITV's popular games show, which will continue in its original format with presenters Andy Crane, Violet Berlin and Zee Wright, will begin on Thursday September 9th at 4.45...

...Sky TV's 'Skytext' service has become the latest teletext operation to offer a computer games 'magazine' as part of its service. Updated twice weekly, the new Power Zone section will consist of 30 screens (or pages) of charts, news and reviews...

...Top music shop HMV has shown that it definitely means business with its recent move into games, having opened what it claims to be the largest games department in Europe in its shop in London's Oxford Street. The new department takes up just less than 8,000 square feet of what is already the largest music shop in the world...

...Thalion have finally finished messing around with No Second Prize and all versions available from now should be fully A1200-compatible. Although the game doesn't look much different at first it's actually a lot smoother and thus even more enjoyable, if that's possible...

...Ooops! The version of Scrabble reviewed a couple of months ago wasn't designed to run exclusively on the A1200 and the A500/600 version is exactly the same. Sorry, US Gold, our mistake...

...Ooops again! You may have noticed that in last month's issue the Overall rating for The Ancient Art Of War In The Skies mysteriously disappeared. For those of you still interested, it should have been 73%...

CHARTS



GAMES CENTRE

THE AMIGA FULL-PRICE TOP TEN

1. Flashback (US Gold)
2. Graham Gooch's Cricket (Audiogenic)
3. Championship Manager '93 (Domark)
4. Desert Strike (Electronic Arts)
5. Reach For The Skies (Virgin Games)
6. A-Train (Ocean)
7. Premier Manager (Gremlin)
8. Sensible Soccer 92/93 (Renegade)
9. Superfrog (Team 17)
10. The Chaos Engine (Renegade)

THE AMIGA BUDGET TOP TEN

1. Final Fight (Kixx)
2. Alien Breed '92: Special Edition (Team 17)
3. Pirates (Kixx XL)
4. MiG-29 (The Hit Squad Platinum)
5. First Division Manager (Codemasters)
6. Lotus Turbo Challenge 2 (GBH)
7. Populous (The Hit Squad)
8. R.B.I. 2 (Respray)
9. Trivial Pursuit (Respray)
10. California Games 2 (Kixx)



WIN!

An A1200 plus some Gremlin games to play on it!
PLUS! Ten copies of Legend Of Sorasil for the runners-up!


All courtesy of Gremlin







Think of something quite big. Then treble it. Add it to something bigger. What have you got? Who knows, but I bet it would pale into insignificance if you placed it next to Legend Of Sorasil, Gremlin's next blockbusting release. Yes, the sequel to HeroQuest will be hitting those shelves within the next couple of months and to celebrate this fact the Sheffield-based software company have given us a brand spanking new A1200. We were thinking about keeping it ourselves until we remembered that it's probably illegal and - hey! - you deserve it more than we do.

That's right, one lucky reader will receive a super Amiga, Zool A1200, Nigel Mansell A1200, Premier Manager (okay, so it's not A1200, but it does work) and Legend Of Sorasil. Excellent! And, as if that wasn't enough, there are ten copies of Legend Of Sorasil for those of you who are too crap to win the main prize (I think they're called runners-up - Ed.). Even excellenter!

So what on God's clean earth do you need to do to stand a chance of collecting one of these prizes? Good question, but be warned that this isn't just any old compo which namby-pampy, nappy-wearing softies can enter. Oh no. We're after the hardest, the meanest, the downright toughest adventurers among you because the main prize has been kidnapped by some evil hardcase and we're too scared to rescue it ourselves.

What we want you to do is enter a spooky labyrinth, locate the A1200 and defeat the kidnapper by correctly solving a few puzzles. Pop the answers on a postcard or a stuck down envelope and send it to: I'm Really Tough, Me, Compo, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU to arrive here by no later than July 28th. The first totally correct answer we pull out of the cave will receive an A1200 complete with all the other stuff and the next ten runners-up will each receive a copy of Legend Of Sorasil.Yes, all the usual The One competition rules apply and, as usual, no correspondence will be entered into.

OUTSIDE THE LABYRINTH

Right, you've found the labyrinth but there are three entrances, two of which lead to certain death! After a few minutes of ip, dip, dog sh*tting you spot a piece of paper nailed to a nearby tree upon which the words "Use the door with the manufacturers of the HeroQuest boardgame inscribed on it, for the others will surely end in tears" on it. Which door do you take?

1 MB GAMES
2 SB GAMES
3 DU GAMES

SAFELY INSIDE

Good, you've made it so far. Once safely inside you immediately come up against a huge dragon who will incinerate you if you don't tell him who sang the song 'I Need A Hero'. What do you say?

1 Tina Turner
2 Bonnie Tyler
3 Clive Anderson

NOT FAR NOW

Having impressed the dragon with you popular music knowledge you head off further into the maze. Then, disaster strikes! The evil hardcase appears and begins swiping at you with his huge sword. You'll decide to distract him with some movie trivia. Shout out the director of the top film Gremlins. Well, who is it?

1 Joe Dante
2 Steven Spielberg
3 George Lucas

DEATH OR GLORY

Whilst the dragon attempts to engage you in an interesting debate about how Gremlins couldn't really exist, you pick up a lit fag lying nearby and stub his eyes out with it. Leaving the cave by a convenient doorway you stumble across the A1200 (and games, of course) lying on the floor.

Tucking it safely into your knapsack you search for the closest exit but discover three buttons in the rock wall; one starts an escalator leading up to freedom and many hours of gratifying gaming whilst the other two open a trap door which will send you to your doom.

The only clue as to what button you should press is the message inscribed above the buttons, which reads: How many Lotus games have Gremlin published?

Which button do you press? One, two or three? We're counting on you.



Letters

English is possibly the most expressive language ever. So why not use it to tell us your views on the world of Amiga games? Get out your quill and write to: Letters, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Or, if you've got one of those Fax devices that seem so popular these days, transmit your effort to us on: 071-972 6710. And so, onto the letters, with a strong international flavour this month...

COMPO COMPLAINER

Dear Mr Upchurch and team,
G'day! This is a letter of two quibbles, so please be understanding. First of all is the fact that us Ozzies can never, ever, ever enter any of your competitions or your give-aways as it takes months to get letters to you. Even if we subscribe, we can't enter the competitions.

I was very, very, extremely upset about the Darkseed competition. I have read Necronomicon by Mr Giger and was very excited by the competition - doubly so after reading your review and playing your demo. But looking at the closing date (only two months too late) I had to whip out the tissues for the tears and promptly threw my deodorant can at full force against the wall in despair.

This has happened so many times before, I felt it was my duty to all Australians to bring this point into the light. The Giger books would have been excellent, but the opportunity for the Darkseed game would have elevated you and your team to God-like status. But all to no avail because I didn't have the chance of an illiterate two-legged British moggy. Please fix this because I am desperate but hopeful.

Secondly, why do the people in Australia's motherland always write in to whinge about pointless things such as: other whingers, console games machines (there is a computer for every taste - although I agree that the Amiga rules) and printing errors, when space could be better used in valid points such as the competition quibbles.

Peter Dawson (no relation to Darkseed Dawson),
Adelaide, South Australia.

P.S. Please don't suggest reading Ozzie mags because they don't even stack up to a pile of koala guano - The One is the only one for moi.
P.P.S. Please print this letter so the more concerned Australians know there is a voice for them, or just give me a ring so that I know someone is listening to us.

We ARE listening to you, Peter - if you read on you'll find two more letters from your fellow countrymen (and woman). Yes, we know it's a problem for our overseas readers to enter compos before they close, simply because you get the issues so long after the British readers. You have our sympathies and from now on we'll try and extend the competition deadline for as long as possible. Obviously there are certain time-sensitive situations (like the FA Cup Compo) where this will be difficult but from next issue we'll allow more time.

THE GREAT SONIC IS DEAD (1991-1993)



One day, when Sonic span over to my house for a cuppa, I firmly decided that it would be his last. I was sick of his irritating Amiga incompatibility, his annoying smug expression and his overfast parallax scrolling routines. I got him in the corner and drew my trusty .357. His face turned from smarmy chirpiness to wide-eyed terror - then I pulled the trigger. His spiky blue brains splattered against the wall and for once in his life he realised that Ishar, KGB and Sensisoccer were better than frustratingly linear platform games.

By Matt, Will and Joe,
Taunton, Somerset.

Nice one.

AUSSIE ANGST

Dear The One,
I am writing to you concerning three things that have caught my attention in the last The One magazine I have been able to purchase down under, i.e. March '93.

(1) Your magazine gets to my newsagent well before the other Amiga ones, i.e. Your March issue gets here at least two weeks earlier. I can only assume that yours is a far superior mag.

(2) The letter from Mrs. C. Hughes about 'Duff Disks'. I have never received a 'duff' (in Australia read 'dud') disk on my The One magazine. I have a 500 with 1Mb. Your disks ALWAYS work the way your magazine says they will. Unlike others not good enough to mention.

3. This is a criticism. Yes, it is good to have software from down under, but the land down under is Australia NOT New Zealand. Also the slang you have used in your article is Australian not New Zealand! Unlike Australia, New Zealand DO NOT have kangaroos as native to their country. Australians are Aussies and proud of it. New Zealanders are Kiwis and proud of it.

It can be compared to saying that Great Britain is in Italy. Strewth, guys, even this bird knows that NZ is hundreds of miles away and separated by an ocean to boot. Anyway, Kiwis have a funny accent - ask any Aussie and they'll tell ya that fish and chips are fish and chips not fush und chups.

Anyway, I like your magazine and please keep up the excellent work.

Debbye Asmussen,
Victoria, Australia.

Thanks for your support, Debbye. We're sorry about the Australia/New Zealand mix up. Please excuse our ignorance - we're just sad old pommies when all's said and done.

NO TEAM SPIRIT

Dear The One,
First of all, great mag - well, apart from your review of Zool. I finally picked it up last month only to learn that it's one of the biggest pieces of crap I've ever played. What were you smoking when you reviewed it?

Now for my real reason for writing in - why are Team 17 not distributing their games in Australia? I've had to purchase mine from pommie mail order companies. I mean it's not as if there's no demand for them. Recently I sold some of my games second hand and everyone wanted Project-X. I would distribute the games in Australia if that's what it took to get them here. Could you please find out what's going on for me, and I'll send your 'doctor' some grog.

Hayes Jupe,
Adelaide, Australia.

P.S. I was stoked to hear about ALIEN BREED 2 on the A1200, but is there any chance of mission disks for it after that?

I gave Team 17 a ring and in their

ever-obliging way they said, "You can obtain any of our games in Australia from Hotpoint, who can be contacted on Australia 0290 65088." I hope that sorts you out.*

EASY RIDER?

Dear The One,
As consoles seem to be getting all the hype at the moment, I think some computer games manufacturers are trying to make their games too much like console games. This wouldn't be a problem if console games weren't so easy. On my Amiga I recently bought Superfrog, Chaos Engine and Chuck Rock 2 - within two days I completed Superfrog and Chaos Engine, and after three days I completed Chuck 2.

Games that came out before consoles really took off are much harder e.g. Project-X, Leander. I have a lot of other games which have tried to copy console games (e.g. Zool, Addams Family) and these games are also quite easy. I hope games get harder on the A1200.

Gareth Moseley,
Cardiff, S. Wales.

P.S. Is there going to be a Leander 2 sometime?

We're back to the old difficulty level debate once again! I think it's unfair to say that games are too easy because they're trying to emulate the consoles - have you seen how easy your typical Megadrive game is? We've heard of some instances where gamers have completed console games on their first or second attempt and we've never heard of an incident like this on the Amiga.

The only reason that The Chaos Engine and Superfrog were relatively easy to complete is because of their password options. If you couldn't restart the game at a later level then I'm sure that you'd at least triple the gaming time. The trouble is, though, most gamers actually prefer to use codes, and I can't say I blame them. After all, it can become annoying having to play through level one again and again. If you want to increase longevity then I'd suggest that you tried to play the game from start to finish in one go.

TOO RUDE!

Dear The One,
After reading Nathan White's letter last month, I think you owe him an apology. Really, telling an avid The One fan to go away. I believe he has many good points, I can't say that I'm a Lemmings fan but I still agree that the music is quite catchy and adds to the likeability of the game.

Not long ago I decided to buy an Action Replay. Now I find that I can't live without it, mainly because I love to rip tunes out of games and add them to my Various Music Collection disks. Now I don't really care if the game's crap as long as the music is of good quality. Among the tunes I have successfully ripped include the excellent piano concerto from Agony, the haunting sounds of the death scene from a demo of Abandoned Places 2, and the two unique modes (rave and 'old timer') from Project-X plus many more.

I too have noticed an unfortunate change in the music on the Amiga, especially with the new LucusArts games, Monkey Island 2 and Fate of Atlantis. When playing these games I can't help but notice how crap the soundtracks are - it sounds as if Lucusarts had neglected the fact that the Amiga has four standard sound channels. And the *i*MUSE system - yes, a good idea but only for the PC, that kind of thing doesn't work on the Amiga.

Heading back to the Action Replay, I was thinking about buying an A1200, but noticed it doesn't have one of those expansion ports on the side. Is there any news of an AR for the A1200?

Scott Wiseman,
Whitehills, Banff.

Sorry Nathan - I admit that the comment wasn't called for. I'd agree that the LucasArts games don't have great thumping soundtracks like other games we'd care to mention and the iMUSE system is a farce on the Amiga but I suppose we do have to make some allowances because they're American (that was a joke, by the way). As for AR for the A1200, I'd say that it's only a matter of time.

COLLECTOR'S ITEM

Dear The One,
I am very upset as I can never get hold of your magazine. I always ask for it and they say they are only sent one copy and I know many people who are trying to get it. It is you who is loosing out. I have a copy of the April issue but that was only because I was in London when I bought it. Please can you tell me where I can get it from. I know I have missed the May issue but all the other magazines do a back-issues service.

Peter C. May,
Coleshill, W. Midlands.

You can order back issues from our Back Issues Department, funnily enough, by ringing them up or writ-



ing to them at the address shown on the contents page. If you order the mag from your newsie then I'd expect he'd be more than happy to oblige but if he isn't then I'll come round and sort him or her out personally.

LOO LOON!

Dear The One,
I am writing to you about the rather rude subject - toilets. There seems to be a certain lack of them in games. The only game I have seen the main character get it 'down and out' is Wizkid. I seriously think programmers should consider putting toilets in games such as Legends Of Valour. Then, if you 'did it' in the street and a policeman saw you you'd be arrested but if you didn't bother ' letting it out' you would automatically 'do it' in your clothes, thus becoming smelly and therefore less popular.

Now I have got that subject 'over and out' I will move on to another subject: easiness of games. I noticed late last year that many people were complaining about the easiness of games, e.g. Epic and Another World. I bought both of these games and I thought they were great, even though I completed both in a week I still play them over at least once a month. I don't care about people that say they are "crap and easy" I still play them and still thoroughly enjoy them.

Last subject. Piracy. I am surprised how easy it is to obtain pirated games. I have a friend in school who has a friend in another school who has a contact in Holland who constantly sends pirated games to both of them. I really get annoyed by him [the friend] saying "I'm getting Lionheart this week" and "I've just got Body-Blows, It's lush". I have been tempted to ask him to copy some for me but I've resisted. But the thing that bugs me the most is when he says "My God, what's the point in buying originals when you can copy?". I usually answer back with "I'm proud not to be breaking the law" - which is true.

**Stuart Winchester,
Swansea, West Gilam.**

Well done Stuart. We need more people with your attitude if the Amiga is going to retain its healthy supply of games. I really don't know how many times we have to tell you this but more and more people are thinking twice about releasing Amiga games, mainly because sales are being constantly pushed down by piracy. You can see their point; after all, they're not here to create games for nothing are they? Like any business, most of the software publishers are in it for the cash and if they start losing money then it'll only be a matter of time before they'll pull out of the Amiga market.

CDs (when they happen) will certainly have a marked affect on our own little market. Because it's virtually impossible to copy CD games, all CD-drive owners will be forced into buying originals, so hopefully the prices will come down, publishers will begin to support the machine and everyone will be happy. Let's hope so, anyway.

BLOW ME!

Dear The One,
I buy your magazine every month mainly for the reviews, but there is something that I have to know. When you review a game, what would happen if the reviewer didn't like the type of game he was reviewing? This is what concerns me.

I am not a huge beat-'em-up fan, and not too long ago I bought Body Blows expecting it to be a good buy. I found out that it wasn't. It is now at the back of my shelf starting to gather dust but I still play on IK+, which I think is still the best beat-'em- up on the Amiga and I've had it for two years. I don't know why Body Blows got as much as it did and it's not the only time a game has got more or less than it should have. I like Street Fighter 2 better than Body Blows.

Looking back at the magazines I have seen Body Blows and Street Fighter 2 were reviewed by two different people - no names mentioned - so may I suggest that if you review a game, make sure that you like the type of game and keep reviewing that type of game so readers don't get disappointed any more.

**Joe Miles,
Chippenham, Wilts.**

You may have noticed that in last month's issue Simon felt so strongly about Morph that he had his own little box to say exactly what he wanted to. As we said at the time, this isn't the start of a new policy or anything but if the occasion arises then expect to see a few more comments from someone other than the main reviewer.

We do try to distribute games to reviewers who are keen on that particular genre but we'd like to think that we're open-minded enough to rate a game fairly no matter what type it is. But if you constantly give, say, all flight sims to one person then there's never really a chance for the readers to know exactly what the rest of us think, which has to be a bad thing.

MARKY MARK

Dear The One,
After reading a letter by Trevor Smith in May's issue, I couldn't help noticing how, I quote "Everyone has a look at a given game and the final mark printed is a GENERAL consensus agreement by the whole team." How can this be? I refer to Simon Byron's remarks on Championship Manager '93. He couldn't understand how turncoat Whitta awarded the game in question 89%.

If Simon Byron thinks that Championship Manager '93 - which only has updated facts and figures - is only worth 80% then how can you justify a "general consensus of agreement" for marks.

Simon Byron does not obviously agree with Whitta's mark. I know that Simon Byron wasn't working working for The One at the time, but surely Dave Upchurch has an opinion, after all he is the editor.

**R.Minchin,
Gloucester.**

P.S. What happened to Jim Willis?
P.P.S. I agree with that bloke from Fife's comments on Dave Upchurch being in Neighbours.
P.P.P.S. Isn't that tubby Whitta in the latest Sainsbury's advert as the knob of butter, i.e. the one with Dennis Healy?

I agree 100% percent with Simon about Championship Manager '93. What we've got to avoid is where an Editor has the power to change marks left right and centre if he doesn't agree what what someone has said. Obviously there's some leeway and all our marks are a general consensus, but reviewing is a personal opinion and at the end of the day you do need to know exactly what the reviewer is thinking and his reasons for it. The system must be working as it is because it's obvious that other reviewers are getting their points across, otherwise you wouldn't have written in, right?

AND THE FUNKY BUNCH

Dear The One,
I'm writing in response to the 'pathetic' reviews letters in March's issue. I've only been reading The One for a short time but one of the things I respect is that the reviewers aren't afraid to award marks that they feel are correct. If a game is crap then it deserves to be given a crap mark.

I think comparing marks from two magazines on an average game is a risky business and the marks should be compared to similar games in the same magazine to make the results comparative.

I myself wouldn't consider 79% a 'fantastic' mark and certainly wouldn't consider buying anything getting below high 80s, as 79% in my opinion is saying 'be wary of this one as it might be crap', when in fact what they should be saying is avoid this one like the plague.

**Marc Thompson,
Liverpool.**

SAVE THE DOCTOR!

Dear The One,
I am left in a state of shock at what a pr@t Martin Mullen is. STOP the Games Surgery? How stupid can you get. The Games Surgery is very useful to many games players as we are not all blessed with the ability to play the same part of a game hundreds of times until we get past it, or on an adventure game like Gobliiins where some puzzles are often too hard for many games players. So sod Martin and keep the Games Surgery.

**Chris Ince,
No address supplied.**

No problemo. To be honest with you, the Surgery is one of the most popular parts of the mag (in terms of response, at least) and there's no way that we'd ever take such a valued service away from you without a damn good reason.

WHEN?

Dear The One,
I buy your magazine every month because you review games before any of your competitors do, so it came as a great shock to me when one of my 'smug' friends showed me a review of Gunship 2000 in his January edition of Amiga Action. I am amazed that four months on you still haven't reviewed it. Surely Amiga Action reviewed an unfinished Gunship 2000, which they accuse you of doing to games all the time. So when will we see a review of Gunship 2000?

**David Macpherson
Dumbartonshire, Scotland**

P.S. Your X-Wing joke wasn't funny!

As you're aware, Gunship 200 is reviewed in this month's issue and has only been finished for the past week or so.

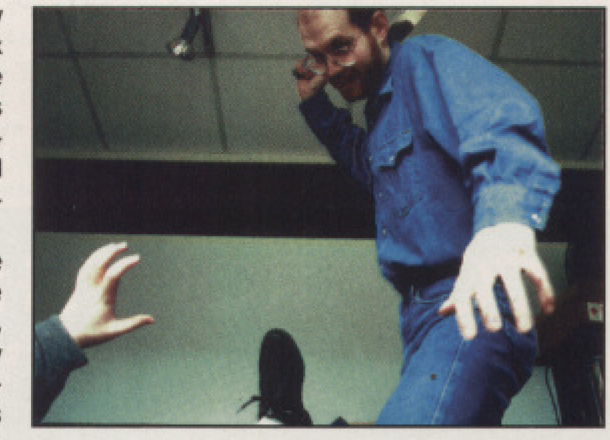
THE THALION STALLIONS

They may not release an avalanche of software but there's no denying that any Thalion game you pick up today is going to be hot, hot, hot, as Robert Smith once said. Simon Byron took one of those Seacat things across the Channel and chatted to the chaps who make the German software house tick.

Thalion was founded in October 1988 by Holger Flottmann, Udo Fischer and Erik Simon, of which only Erik is still with the company today. Their first in-house project was Dragonflight, which began as Udo and Erik's private project a year before but was only finished after one and a half years of full-time development.

Since those humble beginnings they've released loads of products and many staff have come and gone. One thing which hasn't changed, though, is the company ideal: to push every machine they've written on to the very limits. No-one involved has become immensely rich or drives a Porsche but, as Erik Simon puts it, "at least we can look back at all of our games with the feeling that we gave our very best".

I spoke to Erik and Christian Jungen about their personal hopes, their fears and, yes, their tears.



You've just started work on No Second Prize 2, can you tell us anything about it at this early stage?

C: We're hoping to make it far more realistic than the original No Second Prize. You'll be able to ride in the slipstream of the other bikes and that will obviously affect your speed, just like in real life. The computer-controlled opponents will behave more intelligently and we're hoping to include some strong personalities - some riders will be notoriously aggressive whilst others will be known for being a tactical racers, that sort of thing.

Visually, we're going to make the game a lot more complicated and detailed so the race tracks will look as true to life as possible. We're thinking about implementing a four-player link using a split screen and/or a modem link.

Just like in the original No Second Prize, the sequel's 3D system will give an intense feeling of speed. Where other 3D games create a large distance between player and the simulated environment because of the slow screen update, NSP 2 really makes the player a part of the virtual world. Right now I'm still working on the 3D system for Airbus 2 but after that work on NSP 2 will begin in earnest.

E: I think Christian has covered it all, really. Everything is still at an early stage, so what we've said isn't definite. One thing's for sure, we'll have to do loads of research to get the tracks completely realistic. We're aware that everything should look exactly as it does in real life without losing what made the original game so successful, i.e. the speed. Lots of options and competition modes would be nice, and I'm personally looking forward to the possibility of linking machines together and splitting the screen. I'm anxious to see how Chris will manage splitting the screen without losing too much speed as it will require twice the CPU time for 3D calculations.



Surely the A1200 would be able to manage it quite well. How have you found the machine so far?

C: I can't call the A1200 a complete success. The 256-colour mode is an improvement theoretically speaking , but the blitter is not any faster than the one in the normal Amiga 500 and the amount of data which has to be shifted around has doubled. The screen memory could have been better organised, by giving each pixel one byte, a bit like VGA on the PC, or two bytes like the Falcon in true-colour mode. That's why the A1200 isn't really the ideal machine for polygon graphics or new techniques like Gouraud-shading or texture mapping. However, the processor speed is good, especially when you consider the price.

E: I don't what to sound greedy but I wish the improvements on the A1200 were a bit more substantial. There are some impressive technical details, but they aren't enough to make your head explode. A word-per-pixel realcolour mode like the Atari Falcon would have been ideal to whiz around with really amazing 3D stuff. There are more of these little details which spoil the A1200 a little bit.

But what the heck, I don't have to program the machine and from a game designer's point of view, I personally would love to do a special project for the A1200 only. Alas, we've got problems

enough with our high development costs as it is so I fear we can't support the A1200 as much as we'd like to.

There are simply not enough people buying software for all Amiga formats, let alone the A1200 only. Nevertheless, we will try to do what we can. Ambermoon, for example, will feature special routines for the A1200 and turbo-board owners to speed up the texture-mapped dungeons and the option to display textures on the floor and ceilings.

Like other companies, we're forced to move more and more onto the PC. On the other hand, this gives us the opportunity to make use of the enhanced graphic features of the A1200 in the future because we can port over the VGA 256-colour graphics instead of drawing them from scratch for the A1200 version.

So you'll continue supporting the A500, then?
C: Of course, the Amiga is still an attractive market!
E: Yes, we'll try and release as much stuff as possible. It's probable that most of our games will be 1Mb only, though. We'll try to make our future projects play as smoothly as possible but a cheap hard-disk or at least a second disk drive would be very handy. We're trying to match the quality of the big names in RPGs with Ambermoon, for example, and despite intensive packing methods we still don't know if we're going to use 6 or 7 or even more disks when the final version is released.

If you were Mr Commodore, where would you take the Amiga from here?
C: The software should go more in the direction of sophisticated simulations because this type of game has hardly been touched by consoles. The hardware should be improved to make these kind of games possible...
E: ...Yes, the perfect Amiga would be one which is technically so advanced that it is able to create the fascination there was a long time ago when all the C64 owners switched to the Amiga. I know this is a very difficult task, especially at a reasonable price point, but this fascination is the only thing to motivate large groups of people to buy a new machine and perhaps forget about their cheap 50Mhz 486s.

You haven't mentioned CDs. Do you think that the supposed CD Revolution ever take off?
E: I've got mixed feelings about this. On one hand, the capacity of CD-ROM opens a whole new word for gamers and game-designers but on the other I don't think it pushes the standards of entertaining software forward beyond playing minutes and minutes of ray-traced or digitised picture sequences. Okay, at first it's impressive, yes, but what you've got in the end is a low-quality, short version of something you could have rented from your local video store for a few quid.

The massive amount of data on a CD should be used to make games that are incredibly deep and atmospheric. Imagine having a whole fantasy world with thousands for different creatures. A world so vast that you can get lost exploring it, just like in real life. As far as I can see, there's only one problem: Nobody can afford to produce CD-based software that really uses the medium for things in ways other than sound and graphics. Obviously things will improve as CDs become more commonplace, which they appear to be doing.
C: And I'd like to say that there'll be no revolution until the CD hardware incorporates fast decompressing chips (JPEG, MPEG, etc) which allows the host computer to receive large amounts of data in a very short space of time. It's all very well having a storage medium which can hold vast amounts of data but if you can't use it fast enough then it ruins the machine's potential.

> **"Nobody can afford to produce CD-based software that really uses the medium for things in ways other than sound and graphics."**
> **Erik Simon**

In what ways would you say the German Amiga market differs from the British?
E: If you want to get rich quick in the German games market you'll have to write either a football management game or an economics simulation. Our problem is that we find them dead boring so I guess we'll have to stick to racing and flight simulations and huge role-playing games. Both of these genres are generally well accepted by most German games players. Action games are almost a stillbirth, although Lionheart did fairly well for a short time here.
C: This doesn't mean that no German players buy action games, just that its less than in Britain.

What about piracy in Germany?
E: It's constantly pushing us towards the PC, it's that bad. Although I love playing and designing action games like Lionheart, from a personal point of view I'm also interested in complex RPGs and more involved games like that so if we did have to totally move across to the PC, it wouldn't be too much of a personal problem. That said, though, I do love the Amiga and it would be a shame to be forced away from it as some of the action games the Amiga is renowned for are truly excellent. Maybe there's still hope for with the A1200 and future Amiga models and, as I've said before, we'll continue to support the Amiga for as long as possible.
C: It's odd when you consider that there's hardly a country with a larger pirate scene than German yet it's the country with the toughest laws.

So how is Thalion trying to combat piracy?
C: By making more complex games with more extensive manuals. Nowadays copy protection and legal procedures are useless.



CHRISTIAN JUNGEN

Chris is 27, 1.9 metres tall, 87kg with brown curly hair. Influenced by Pong (?), Chris bought a C64 and started programming in Basic "like everybody did" (did you?) and, having bought Elite, became fascinated with 3D programming. He studied computer science at the ETH Zurich, wherever that is, but half a year into his course he decided that studying computer science wasn't as thrilling as programming 3D for games. After programming his first 3D kernel he joined up with Thalion.

Softography:
No Second Prize (programming & game design)
Airbus 320 (ST conversion)



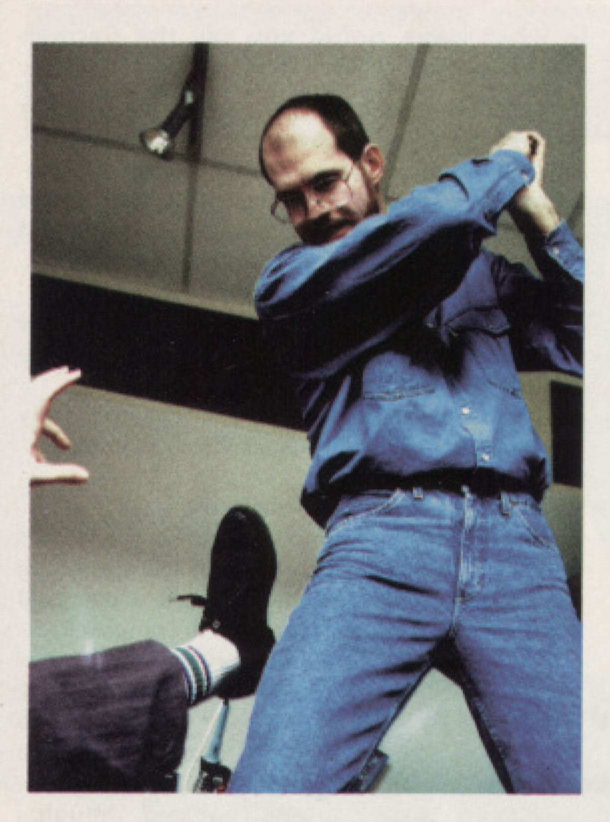
ERIK SIMON

Erik is 29 years-old, 2 metres tall, bald and bearded. Although he was born in Hamburg, he grew up in the Pfalz, a German wine cultivation area, before moving to Gutersloh four years ago. At school he began studying communication engineering up until he was called up for National Service (yes, they still have it in Germany - be thankful you don't live there) after which he co-founded Thalion. Since then Erik's been haunting programmers and graphic artists as 'chief' of the development department.

Softography:
Dragonflight (graphics and game design)
Wings of Death (graphics)
Amberstar (some graphics and production)
Trex Warrior (graphics and game design)

WHO?

Just who are these two geezers, then? Where did they come from? And just what would 'our Graham' say about them if they ever appeared on Blind Date? Here's all you need to know...



E: That's right, we didn't even bother protecting Lionheart because there's no point in simply delaying the pirates from cracking the games and sticking them on bulletin boards. If the Amiga users don't change their way of thinking about pirating games the machine will disappear from the market. We're trying to offer a fair amount of quality and we don't copy protect our games because we don't want to punish honest customers with funny protection methods. Copy protection won't change people's minds.

Why do hackers spend so much time cracking copy protection?
E: I can understand why people get a buzz out of cracking but to be honest I don't think that the crackers are the real problem, especially with the on-disk copy protection being gradually reduced. And I'm not entirely convinced that swapping a few pirate copies in the schoolyard is a huge problem. Obviously it damages sales but the real pain in the what's-it-called are the people who are professionally distributing pirate copies as a large scale business.

> **"If you want to get rich quick in the German games market you'll have to write either a football management game or an economics simulation."**
> **ERIK SIMON**

C: I disagree. Pirates are people who satisfy their basic instincts. They experience gratification when they are able to cause software companies financial damage with relatively little effort.

Will piracy ever be wiped out?
E: Certainly not. There is piracy on all formats, including PC and even consoles. But on these machines it hasn't surpassed the point yet where it's getting dangerous to invest a lot of money in expensive projects.
C: And anyway, has the drug problem ever been solved?

On that sombre note I bid you farewell and wish you success with your future projects;

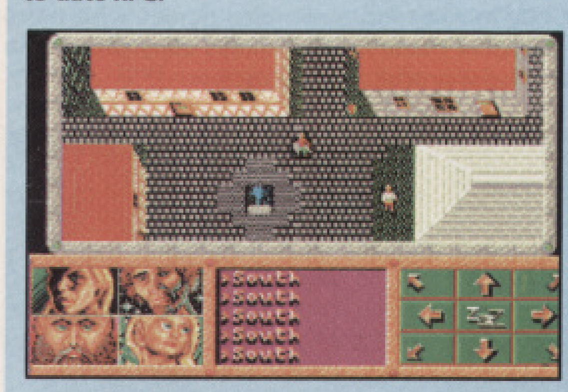
THALION: THE STORY SO FAR

This might be all well and good, but what have Thalion actually done?

Over, once again, to Erik

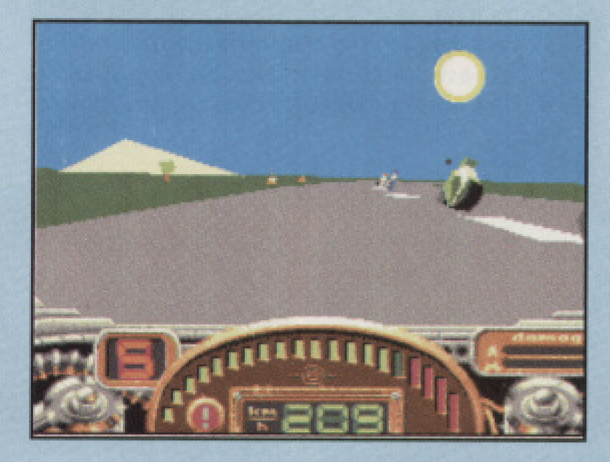
DRAGONFLIGHT

"Our first RPG which took us three years to finish. For the standards of that time, it was a massive game with both 2D and 3D sections. It began its history as the hobby of two (2!) people - what a good way to show how naive we were! If it had been published one or two years ago, it would have caused quite a sensation but when it came out it was 'only' an up-to-date RPG."



NO SECOND PRIZE

"Another project which took us a long time but we think it was well worth the effort. Show us a faster vector-graphics racing game on the Amiga and you'll receive a giant cask of German beer." [I've written an AMOS 3D bike game which is quite good - do I win?]



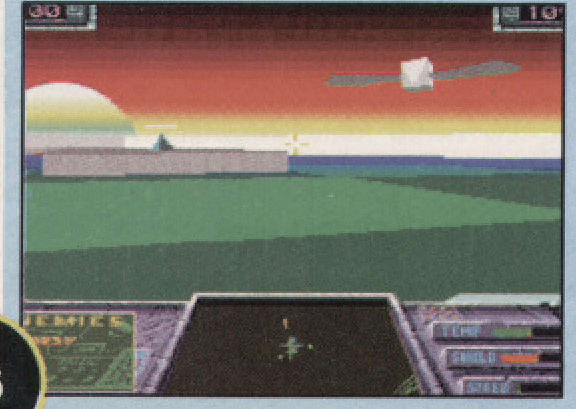
LIONHEART

"Technically, we tried to do with the Amiga what we did with the ST years ago (that is, to kick butt.) In terms of playability it hopefully shows that we are now experienced games designers. And when it comes to graphics and size, all there is to say is that we barely managed to cram it onto four disks."



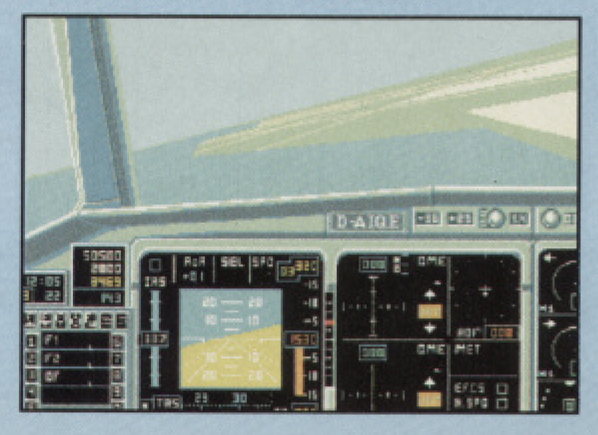
TREX WARRIOR

"In our opinion, this is a highly-underrated 3D vector-graphics shoot-'em-up. Despite the fast 3D, we put lots of effort into the playability area." [Not released in England]



AIRBUS 320

"Our product with the highest sales figures. Programmed by Rainer Bopf, a German Luftwaffe Officer, its main fascination is the extreme realism of the flight physics."



AMBERSTAR

"Our second RPG. It didn't concentrate too much on flashy graphics but its depth, complexity and weeks of adventure still hasn't been put to shame even by current RPGs."



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Screen shots taken from the Amiga version

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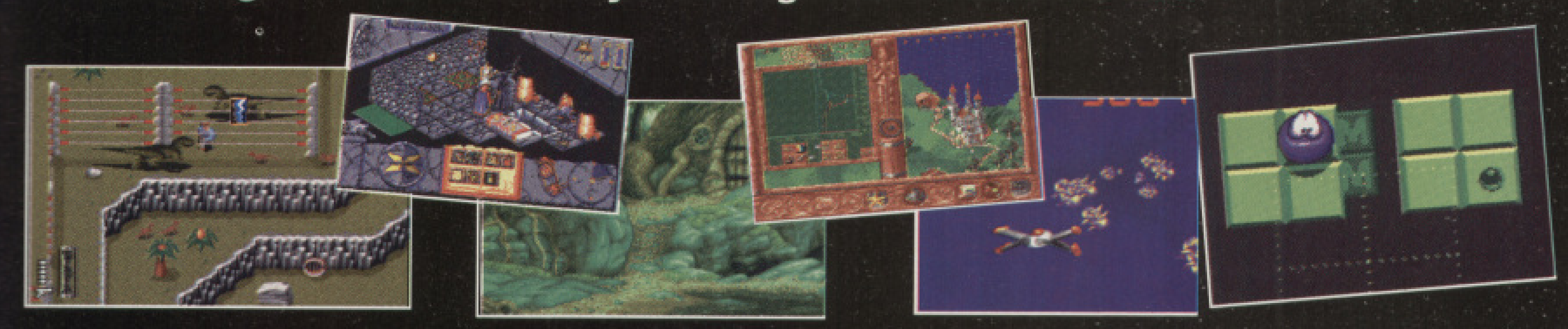
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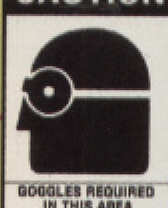
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Western Systems' 486 PC with CD-ROM drive — MUST be won!

CAUTION!

WORK IN PROGRESS

The old man dragged his limp and useless body up the torn and derelict street. Once this had been a proud town filled with life and hope and laughter. He turned his poisoned red eyes to the dark stained sky that had once shone with a brightness only a few could remember, and falling to his knees cried "Oh dear Lord! If only this months Work In Progress wasn't so bloody smashing." But of course it was.





JURASSIC PARK

Steven Spielberg's Jurassic Park looks set to trample all the other movies at the box office this summer. It may not have any big name stars in it but what it does have, by the herd, is dinosaurs, created using computer-generated special effects the like of which have never been seen before. In yet another The One EXCLUSIVE, closet paleontologist David Upchurch previews this groundbreaking movie and takes a look at the work so far on Ocean's impressive-looking computer game tie-in.



Dinosaurs have always been popular with children but it seems as if the yoof of Britain is going particularly dino-bonkers at the moment. The would-be Simpsons-beater Dinosaurs TV show is very popular (though goodness knows why), a massive dinosaur exhibition recently took place at the Natural History Museum and there are numerous dinosaur-related magazines currently doing the rounds, one of which offer kids the chance to, week by week, build their own model T. Rex. And, as if that weren't enough, there's even a new range of cuddly soft toy dinosaurs called DinoRoars that, when squeezed, emit a cute growl. Whatever happened to the good old Action Man?



(Right) Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum and Bob Peck glance upwards at something *really* scary - probably Jurassic Park's rumoured production costs of over 100 million US dollars which, if true, make it the most expensive movie of all time!







Jeff, Dicky, Laura and Sam witness the hatching of a baby Velociraptor

MONSTER MERCHANDISING!

It probably won't come as a surprise to you to learn that there is an unbelievable amount of stuff tied in with Jurassic Park. As well as the game (obviously) there are over 1000 types of goody coming your way such as Jurassic Park sweets, Jurassic Park toothbrushes (presumably for cleaning your teeth with after you've eaten the Jurassic Park sweets), Jurassic Park stationery, Jurassic Park boardgames, Jurassic Park models, Jurassic Park playsets, Jurassic Park bedspreads, Jurassic... You get the idea. McDonald's are even doing a Jurassic Park meal! Mmmm, love those brontoburgers!

The weird twist to all this is that, in the novel anyway, merchandising was one of the areas Hammond was keen to exploit, even going so far as proposing the sale of licensed, genetically-engineered mini-dinosaurs as pets for kids. Of course, current genetic technology doesn't quite stretch to that kind of spin-off... yet.

A terrified Joseph Mazzello is held still by Sam Neill as the curious Tyrannosaurus Rex inspects the wreckage of their touring jeep.



(Right) Sir Richard Attenborough is prevented fom giving another overlong Oscar acceptance speech by Sam Neill and Laura Dern.

But all this is nothing compared to the monster madness that will sweep the country come July 16th, the date of the European cinematic release of Jurassic Park. The film has already been the cause of Brontosaurus-long queues in the States, where it opened a few weeks back, and if the film repeats that success here (and there's no reason why it shouldn't) chances are that you too can expect some long waits in line to get your ticket.

The film is based on Michael Crichton's 1990 hit novel of the same name and takes place on an island just off the coast of Costa Rica. There the hugely-wealthy and slightly megalomaniacal John Hammond has built the ultimate safari-style theme park. Using the DNA from dinosaur blood found inside prehistoric mosquitoes preserved in amber, Hammond's researchers have genetically engineered living, breathing dinosaurs.

As the park approaches final completion, Hammond invites a select group of people to the park to see their reaction to its wonders. But as the visitors tour the park a massive storm breaks and, during the confusion, one of Hammond's flunkies turns traitor and sabotages the park's security systems, allowing the dinosaurs to escape. And naturally they're very curious to find out just what a man tastes like - perhaps they should have got a part in Alive.

However, if you think that, given that brief plot summary, Jurassic Park is going to be just another monster movie you'd be wrong. Crichton, who trained to be a doctor at Harvard University, likes to invest his novels with scientific authenticity and use the plot as a device to discuss scientific theories and ideas. During the course of the novel, Crichton touches on topics such as the risks of genetic engineering and even the application of Chaos Theory to large-scale systems. Don't worry if this all sounds a little heavy and erudite, though, because Jurassic Park is a cracking adventure too.

Crichton himself had a go at turning the book into a film but eventually it was David Koepp, who wrote the screenplay to Death Becomes Her, who fleshed out the final working script. It is, apparently, very close to the novel - not surprising really because the book, with its short chapters and emphasis on dialogue, reads very much like a film novelisation anyway. But even with a script in the bag, the hardest part of the project was yet to come...

CREATING THE DINOSAURS

An adventure 65 million years in the making" claims the ad blurb for Jurassic Park and, while this is something of an exaggeration, it's true to say that the film's not had a speedy or easy route to the screen.

It's nearly three years since Spielberg first drew together a team of top special FX gurus, including Industrial Light And Magic's Dennis Muren, animatronic's expert Stan Winston (of Aliens and T2 fame) and stop-motion maestro Phil Tippett (who has worked on all the Stars Wars films, amongst many others) to discuss bringing Jurassic Park to the screen.

The problem was simple: For Jurassic Park to work, the dinosaurs would have to look absolutely realistic. For this reason the original idea of using stop-motion animation was soon discarded. This is the way most movie dinosaurs are created; by building a jointed model and photographing it frame by frame, moving the model ever-so-slightly between snaps, so that when the film is played back at normal speed the model animates and appears to move. The drawback of this method is that you get a 'strobing' effect, because there's no blurring on the motion.

After a lot of research and some pioneering work in films such as The Abyss, Terminator 2 'and Death Becomes Her, the team decided to create the dinosaurs through a combination of animatronic puppets for close ups (many of them full size!) and computer-generated images (or CGIs) for shots of the dinosaurs actually moving around.

This is something of a first, for while CGIs have been used before to create otherworldly spaceships, water tentacles and mutating metal blobs, they've never been used to depict real, living creatures. The production team are determined to make the dinosaurs as authentic as possible, going so far as to objecting to anyone calling them "monsters".

SHOOTING DINOSAURS

In total Jurassic Park's pre-production took a lengthy two years, with actual shooting commencing August 1992 on location on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, where the film's craftsmen had constructed the Park's control centre, dinosaur holding pens and primeval jungle - it's believed to be the largest film set ever constructed. However, the set was completely destroyed by the 160mph winds of Hur-

ricane Iniki, which swept across the island last September. Luckily the location filming had been pretty much completed, so there was little disruption to the film's production.

After this minor setback, filming continued on sound stages at both Universal and Warner Bros, such was the size of the operation, finally wrapping up two weeks ahead of schedule and well below budget. A confident Spielberg then promptly jetted off to Poland where he started filming on his next film Schindler's List, leaving Jurassic Park's post-production chores to Indiana Jones collaborator George Lucas, creator of Star Wars.



THE HOT TICKET FOR THE SUMMER?

Although British audiences have yet to pass judgement on Jurassic Park, advance word is excellent. Chances are if you've been to the flicks recently you'll have seen the film's trailer which shows brief, tantalising glimpses of the dinosaurs in action. And they look incredible.

Certainly Spielberg will be looking for a commercial hit after the relative disappointments of Hook and Always. Although the violence of the book, with its graphic descriptions of disembowelling and mutilation, will no doubt have to be toned down in order to earn the film a PG-13 rating, Spielberg has shown before in films such as Duel and Jaws that he can still scare and shock without resorting to blood and guts.

Jurassic Park's main box-office threat comes from the man mountain Arnold Schwarzenegger. His Last Action Hero opens within a few weeks of Jurassic Park and it's going to be interesting to see which one comes out tops. But given the eternal fascination with all things Saurian, my money's on Jurassic Park being THE monster hit of the year.

The terror begins! The T. Rex ponders on whether to have a meal of canned humans.

THE STARS!

One of the most intriguing aspects of Jurassic Park is that none of its cast are 'big names', say a Tom Cruise or an Arnold Schwarzenegger. Spielberg apparently felt that the dinosaurs should be the main attraction and so has picked a select group of respected and highly-talented actors and actresses to depict the film's various characters, of which the main ones are...

Dr Alan Grant

Dr Grant is a world-respected paleontologist and Jurassic Park's nominal hero. His many years spent examining dinosaur fossils make him an obvious choice as one of the Park's first visitors. Grant is played by Australian heart-throb Sam Neill, who first rose to prominence as the adult Damien Thorn in The Omen III. More recently Neill has provided solid support to Meryl Streep in A Cry In The Dark and Sean Connery in The Hunt For Red October. Jurassic Park could finally be the film to propel Neill into the ranks of true Hollywood stardom.

Dr Ellie Sattler

Dr Sattler is a young paleobotanist and Dr Grant's long-time colleague and lover. She's played by Laura Dern, who made her name starring in the weird and controversial David Lynch movies Blue Velvet and Wild At Heart. Dern's performance in Rambling Rose, her most recent film, won her across-the-board critical praise.

John Hammond

Hammond is the genius who conceived Jurassic Park and financed its construction. Although in his seventies, Hammond is as forceful, energetic and spritely as a man half his age. Sir Richard Attenborough, in his first acting role for thirteen years, is the man who was picked to play him and early indications are that his performance as the lovable megalomaniac is terrific.

Dr Ian Malcolm

Dr Malcolm is a mathematician and renowned 'Chaotician'. He's also the film's prophet of doom, claiming that the complexity of the park's security systems and the unknowns of the genetically-engineered dinosaurs' behaviour mean that the park is bound to run into problems somewhere along the line. Slightly eccentric and idiosyncratic, it's a role tailor-made Jeff Goldblum, the off-the-wall star of The Fly and the Holsten Pils commercials.

Tim and Lex Hammond

Tim and Lex are Hammond's grandchildren, invited to preview the Park so that Hammond can get a child's eye view on its attractions. They're played by Joseph Mazzello and Ariana Richards respectively. One can only hope they won't be too winsome...

THE REAL STARS!

Tyrannosaurus Rex

The largest predator to ever roam the earth, the Tyrannosaurus Rex is roughly 30ft high and 40ft long and mean with it - it can swallow a man whole. Stan Winston and his team actually built a full-size animatronics T. Rex for the film!

Velociraptor

Roughly man-sized, with a six-inch razor-like claw on each foot and capable of reaching speeds of 60mph, the Velociraptor is a vicious killing machine which prefers to hunt in a pack. It's as intelligent as a chimp and often kills for sheer fun.

Dilophosaur

A short, weird-looking beast, the Dilophosaur attacks by spitting a paralysing venom at its prey from ranges of up to 20ft. Recognise it by the coloured crest around its neck that fans out when it's aroused.

Brachiosaur

One of the most peaceful dinosaurs in Jurassic Park, the Brachiosaur is a herbivore. It's long neck allows it to munch on branches and leaves. Often referred to as a Brontosaurus.

Triceratops

A sturdy, stocky animal, the Triceratops is another herbivore. It's most outstanding features are the three horns with protrude from its bone-plated head, which act as a strong defence against potential predators.

BAD EGG!

As part of The One's on-going effort to bring a smile to its readers' faces, we are proud to present two of the world's saddest dinosaur-related jokes...

Q. What do you call a dinosaur with one eye?
A. A Doyouthinkhesaurus!

Q. What do you call a dinosaur with one eye and a pet dog?
A. A Doyouthinkhesaurus Rex!

PROJECT: Jurassic Park
PUBLISHER: Ocean
DEVELOPER: In-house
Matt Wood, Warren Lancashire (Design, Graphics)
Dave Chiles, Lesley Long, Andrew Miah, Robert Walker (Programming)
Ray Coffey, Bill Harbison, Julian Holtom, Ilyas Kaduji, Colin Rushby, Jack Wikeley (Graphics)
Dean Evans (Sound)
INITIATED: November 1992
RELEASE: October 1993





Okay, so now you know all about the film. But what about the game, though? David Upchurch talks to Ocean Software's in-house development team about producing the tie-in to the hottest licence of the year...



(Above) The tiny Dr Alan Grant sprite is pursued by a hungry T. Rex.

(Left) One level of the game takes the player through the Pterodactyl Aviary, a scene that was in the book but is not in the film.

Gary Bracey, Ocean's software director, is not a man known for his reserve. Even so, you can tell he's REALLY excited about Jurassic Park - the bloke sounds like he's going to explode!

"This is Jaws with dinosaurs. This isn't just a film anymore - it's an event," he raves. "It's got everything going for it; it's a thumping good story, it's got Steven Spielberg involved but, best of all, it's about dinosaurs, which is something that kids have been into for 65 million years!"

Well I could argue with that, as homo sapiens didn't evolve until a few million years ago, but I'll let it pass just this once. After all, you can understand Gary's not-so-quiet enthusiasm. Jurassic Park looks set to be hit of the summer and probably of the year too and Ocean have got the rights to produce the game tie-in on Amiga, PC and Nintendo formats. For Ocean it's going to be not so much a cash cow, more a cash triceratops.

But don't groan. If you're having visions of another typical Ocean film tie-in then think again. "Spielberg is a games fanatic himself and has a hands-on involvement to ensure that the final result is as faithful as possible to his original idea," Gary explains. "He would not allow any Mario-type figure to start jumping all over the dinosaurs!" Phew for that!

So just what is Jurassic Park: The Game going to be like? Who better to answer these questions than Ocean's in-house programming team. For the Amiga and PC alone there's an incredible total of thirteen people working on the game, with more in the States producing the console versions.

First things first, then - why such a big team? "It's a big project!" laughs Andrew Miah, one of Jurassic Park's four coders. "Half the game is in a top-viewed angle and the other half is in Ultima Underworld-style texture-mapped 3D. The 3D is unlike anything you've seen on the Amiga before. The graphics window is about three or four times bigger than Legends of Valour's and running twice as fast. All the games that have been done in that format before have been adventure games but this is more of a hack and shoot-'em-up."

Somewhat different to the old, much-criticised mix of platforms, block puzzles and 3D driving sections, isn't it? Did the team consciously try to move away from that style of game? "We really wanted to do something a bit different, something that ties in with the



movie a bit more," says Matt Wood, Jurassic Park's co-designer and graphic artist.

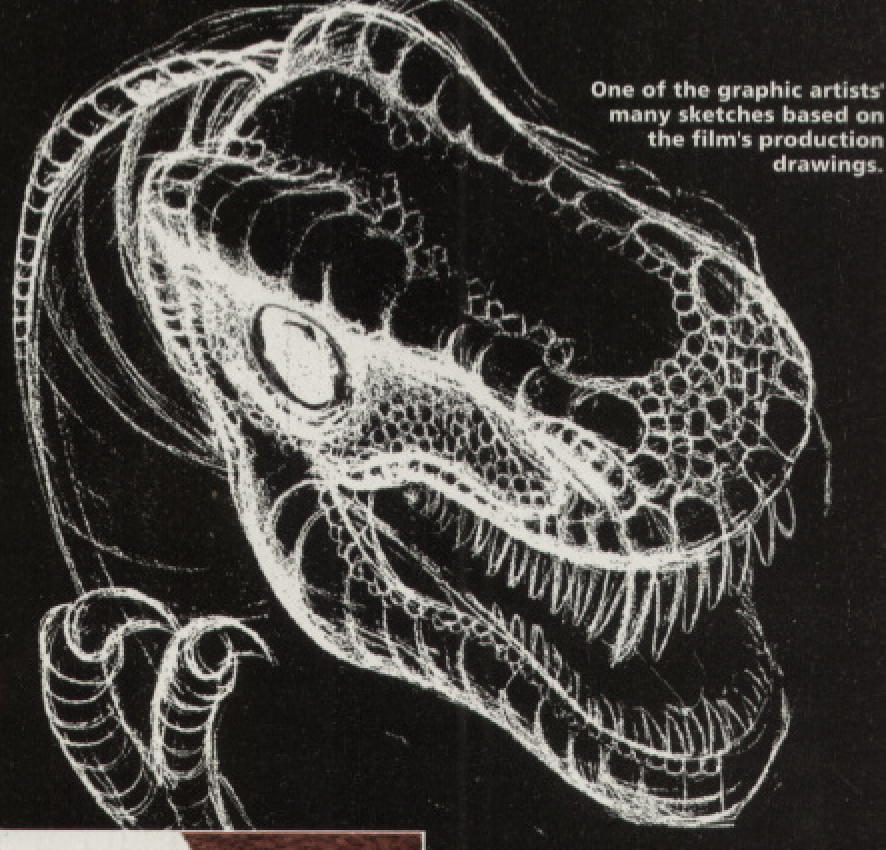
"We actually went through about three or four game designs before we had one that we were really happy with. Initially it was looking like just another Ocean licence - you know, the sort that everybody hates with a sub-game here and a little puzzle there. But we thought 'No, no, this won't do at all.' And so we've ended up with something very different."

Essentially the game is an arcade adventure. The action starts just after the dinosaurs have escaped from their pens, with Dr Grant stranded in the middle of the park. His task is to try and get back to the park's control centre, which involves a dangerous trek through monster-infested countryside.

These parts of the game are depicted using a tilted top-down view, with the athletic Dr Grant running and jumping about the landscape, picking up useful objects and blasting any prehistoric pests with his rifle. There are various problems to be solved along the way before the player can move onto the next area of the park. "Most of the time your task is to rescue the children [Hammond's grandchildren, who are also stranded in the park] and get them out of trouble," explains Matt. "We were told not to do just a shooting game. It's like Cadaver in a lot of ways."

"Initially [Jurassic Park] was looking like just another Ocean licen - you know, the sor that everybody hate with a sub-game he and a little puzzle there. But we thought 'No, no, thi won't do at all.' An so we've ended up with something ver different."

Matt Wood, Jurassic Park's co-designe and graphic artist.



One of the graphic artists' many sketches based on the film's production drawings.





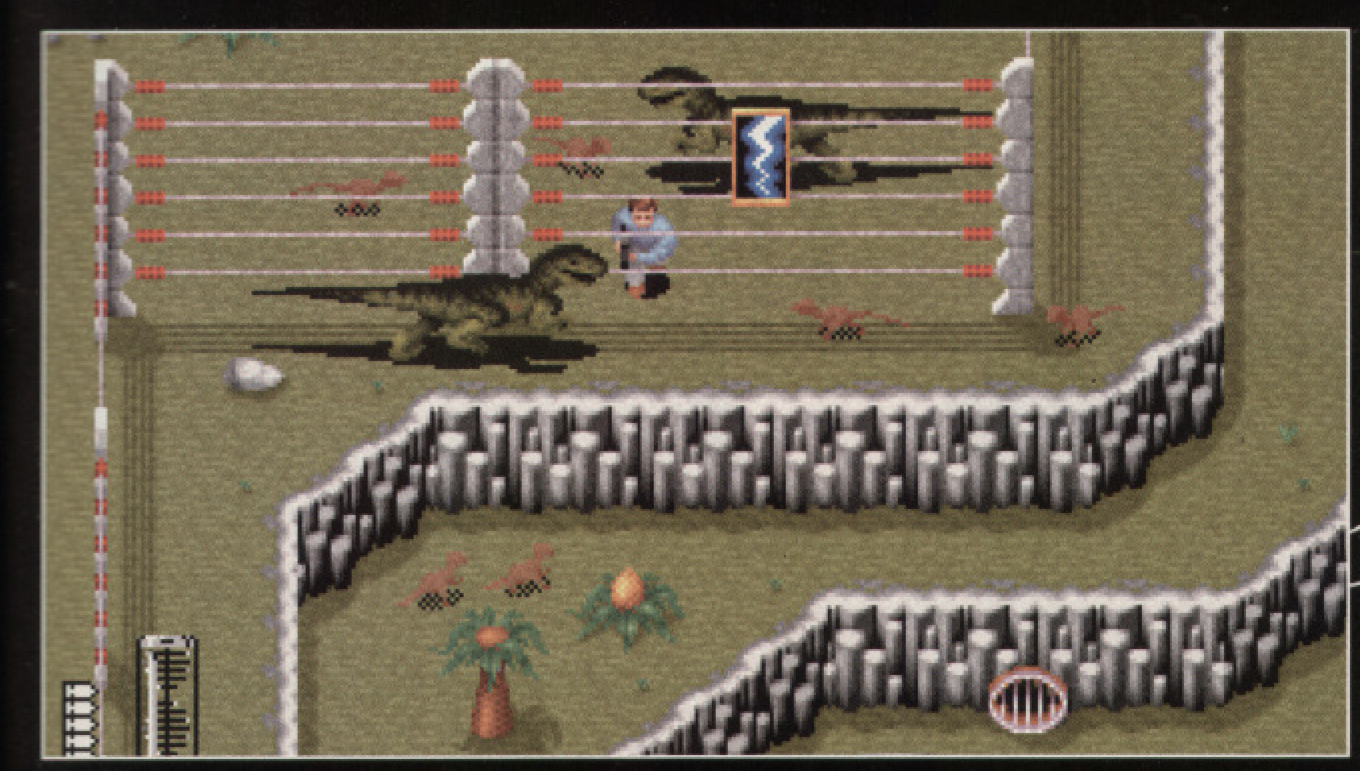
"There's a lot of interaction with the landscape involved," points out Andrew. "It may seem at first like you just have to walk around shooting things, but you soon find that you have to move rocks and tree trunks around in order to make progress, so an element of strategy begins to appear."

The slightly-skewed angle on the action has caused problems, especially for the artists. "I don't know how many times I had to redraw the sprites," says Bill Harbison, one of Matt's fellow graphic artists. "I had to come up with eight separate frames of animation for each of the different directions. You can probably work out for yourself how much work that involved."

"On the basic Amiga the graphics will be in 32 colours," says Matt. "There will be a lot more colours in the A1200 version which'll be pretty much identical to the PC version. Typically the top-viewed bits scroll in 25 frames per second. We compared it to The Chaos Engine and it slows down less frequently than that."

Actually, talking of The Chaos Engine, Jurassic Park does look very similar... "We first saw The Chaos Engine when we were part of the way through coding Jurassic Park and thought 'Oh dear, it's going to look the same' but it looks a lot different when you see it moving," says Matt. "In The Chaos Engine you can't go behind anything but you can in our game. If you walk behind the trees you can see yourself through the leaves. We've been careful to design it so that you don't get lost behind objects though."

This section of the game is pretty much in the bag now, with just a few levels to be designed and dinosaurs to be drawn before it's complete. It's



(Left) Aaaaiiiee! Dr Grant finds himself under threat in the Velociraptor pens.



now the texture-mapped 3D parts of the game that need the most work doing on them. Although the basic 3D engine is in place there's still quite a number of tweaks to be made before it's in a presentable state - the charging dinosaurs float above the floor at the moment, for example - hence the lack of screenshots. Even so, it's looking good...

"Although Andy mentioned Ultima Underworld earlier, the gameplay isn't as involved as that," explains Matt. "It's more about stealth and creeping around corners, wondering whether you're going to get eaten by something big and horrible. There are a few puzzles, like how to get through the door into the next area, but in the game as a whole we've tried to keep everything moving along.

"There's no messing around trying to find which key you need to open the door and that sort of thing. You'll just walk into the door and if you've got the key then you'll go through. There's no point wasting the player's time making them hunt through their inventory.

"We've got some clever lighting effects in the 3D sections," Matt continues. "If you turn the lights off the tunnel will get darker into the distance. If you fire a bazooka shell down the tunnel its jet will light up the walls as it goes. We've drawn the texture maps for the walls as though they've been illuminated from the ceiling and they can be swapped with other wall textures that have been drawn as if they're not lit. The rooms are detailed as well. There are scaled sprites on the walls that act as light fittings and if you shoot them the lights will go out. There are polygon objects as well that are used for basic furniture. It's quite impressive.

"I don't know what they were playing at when they did Legends Of Valour as our routines seem to be much faster than their's and we only developed our 3D stuff in the last few months. It runs at about ten frames per second on the A1200. But obviously that's all changing day by day as the programmers update the routines."

Doctor Grant's opponents in these 3D sections are the Raptors, intelligent, man-sized predators with razor-sharp talons. These are drawn as scaled sprites. "There are eight different rotations of the Raptors but most of the time you'll just see them running towards you," says Matt. "If you duck as they jump at you you can turn around and see them running away then turning to make another attack."

What sort of material did Universal provide to help you create the game? "The programmers in America who are doing the Nintendo versions got most of the stuff and we got what they passed down to us," says Matt. "We've got lots of photographs of the set, the script, some stills of the dinosaurs and a tape of the sound effects as well. We've used it to sample the T. Rex and the other little dinosaurs to put into the game. They sound quite good."

Presumably Universal keep some sort of eye on progress. Do they stick their oar in much? "We've had the occasional little nudge, like 'We don't want that weapon used' and that kind of thing. The main restriction was the kind of game it was. They didn't want a shoot-'em-up so there are no big weapons in the game. It's more low-key than that."

I'd guess it's quite tough designing a game around a film that you haven't seen? "Yes, it is difficult at times," Matt agrees. "Sometimes someone'll come in the morning and say 'Guess what I saw on television this morning? The dinosaurs!' and, like, none of us have seen them yet! But we're trying to produce a game that's not totally dependent on the film so it doesn't really matter than much."

Doesn't the fact that you haven't seen the dinosaurs in motion cause problems, though, especially in terms of animating the monster graphics? "The animation is tricky, yes," admits Matt. "You've just got to guess, really. But all the dinosaurs are related to an animal that's around at the moment so you can judge it from that."

To produce a satisfying game that works in its own right the Jurassic Park team have had to take some liberties with the subject matter. "Several parts in the game don't strictly happen in the film at all," says Matt. "Although the game's plot follows that of the film, we've borrowed locations featured in the book, like the Pterodactyl Dome [a sort of aviary for prehistoric birds]. We've put that in even though it's not in the film."

So are you sick of dinosaurs yet? Are you looking forward to actually seeing the film after being involved with the tie-in so long? "I can't wait to see it," admits Matt. "We'll probably get to see a preview of the film at the end of June so that we'll have a month or so to make any changes that need making."

What about Steven Spielberg's involvement? Is he being kept abreast of how it's coming along? "I don't really know," says Matt. "I'm sure somebody keeps slipping him little notes about it. I hope he'll like it."



Dr Grant discovers the body of a sick and dying female Triceratops and is forced to adopt her orphaned offspring.



The history books are full of infamous characters who have tried to dominate the world, but have failed. Now here is your chance to write your name on the next page of history.

Quantum Software have developed a new game system enabling you to play against 5 other human players throughout the United Kingdom. This system is called Interactive Computer Play (I.C.P.). Although the origins of I.C.P. stem from Play By Mail, Quantum Software have taken this a step further. The game is played on your computer as in any other computer game, the difference being that in order to interact with other players all turns are saved to disk, and forwarded to us for processing by our computers. All turns are on an approx. 10 to 14 day basis.

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QUANTUM SOFTWARE, 14 BENTHAM ROAD, LANCASTER, LA1 4JX.
TEL: 0524 841616

PROJECT: The Legacy Of Sorasil
PUBLISHER: Gremlin
DEVELOPER: Tony Casson (Producer)
Kevin Dudley (Programmer)
Matt Furniss (Artist)
Michael Hart (Front End)
Paul Green (Designer)
Patrick Phelan (Music and FX)
INITIATED: February 1992
RELEASE: July 1993



HERO FOR A DAY

The risk with sequels is ruining whatever made the first game so good by layering on unncessary bells and whistles. Gremlin, however, think they've avoided such pitfalls with this, the pseudo-sequel to their hit RPG boardgame conversion. Simon Byron tends to agree...

"The lands of Rhia are experiencing a magical plague and almost everyone has lost hope. You have been chosen by the powers above and charged with a quest to save the land..."

This kind of scenario could have come from almost any RPG to have appeared on the Amiga in recent years but it seems that most die-hard role players wouldn't have it any other way. Originality, it appears, is fairly unimportant when compared to the size (yes, it really does count) and atmosphere of a decent quest and as long as there is an involving mission at the core of the game then most adventurers seem pretty happy.

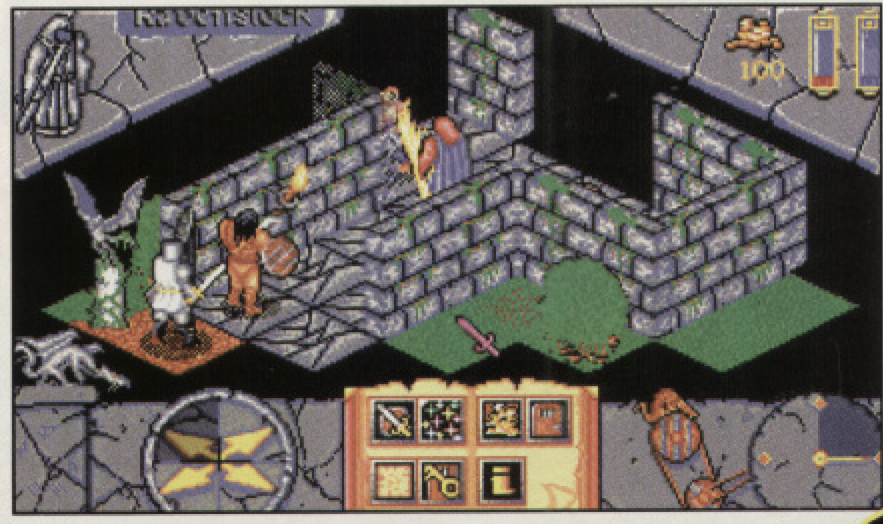
The majority of software houses have tended to concentrate on the Dungeon Master-type RPG where the action is depicted as if you are looking through the hero's eyes. The HeroQuest mode of play, with its 'action points' system, reflects the twelve-sided dice rolling and number tallying systems of the traditional Dungeons and Dragons-style pencil 'n' paper adventures and conveys the 'feel' of the original boardgame outings more accurately.

When Gremlin released their official boardgame conversion onto an unsuspecting public a couple of years ago, it was welcomed with open arms and subsequently went on to sell by the proverbial bucketload. A sequel was always on the cards.

And it's very nearly ready. Yes, for the past year and a bit, Gremlin's team of in-house coders have been working away on the second in the HeroQuest series (not called HeroQuest 2, as you might imagine, though, something to do with licensing deals and other complicated stuff like that). The Legend of Soracil, as it is known, is being developed by a completely different programming team, which is unusual considering that the original coders would have a distinct advantage in the time stakes. Kevin Dudley is the program-



The four adventurers head off into the beginning of the first mission, unaware of the impending doom which lurks behind a nearby tree.



If you look carefully you can see the way that the walls disappear whenever one of your characters moves behind them, meaning that you can keep an eye on them at all times.

mer now and he was on hand to answer any questions I cared to throw at him, the first of which regarded the strange business of swapping developers. Just why had Gremlin done it?

"Mainly to get the project in-house. Mike Hart wrote the original HeroQuest but he was already working on Space Crusade when work was started on Legend Of Sorasil, so he obviously couldn't do both."

So how much research did Kevin do before is started work on HeroQue... The Legend of Soracil? "I didn't really play the HeroQuest boardgame but I played the computer version quite a lot. It was a good introductory role-playing game although for me, as someone who hadn't really played RPGs before, I found it quite tough. I do know that advanced role players didn't reckon it was up to much; they said it was too easy."

How easy is it to design a sequel, given that it obviously has to improve over certain areas of the original game? "Gremlin sent a questionnaire out to fifty registered HeroQuest users, asking exactly what they'd like to see in a sequel. We looked at all their comments and their main grumbles were with the combat aspect of the game, which many people didn't like because of the way that you left the playing area and fought in an arena."

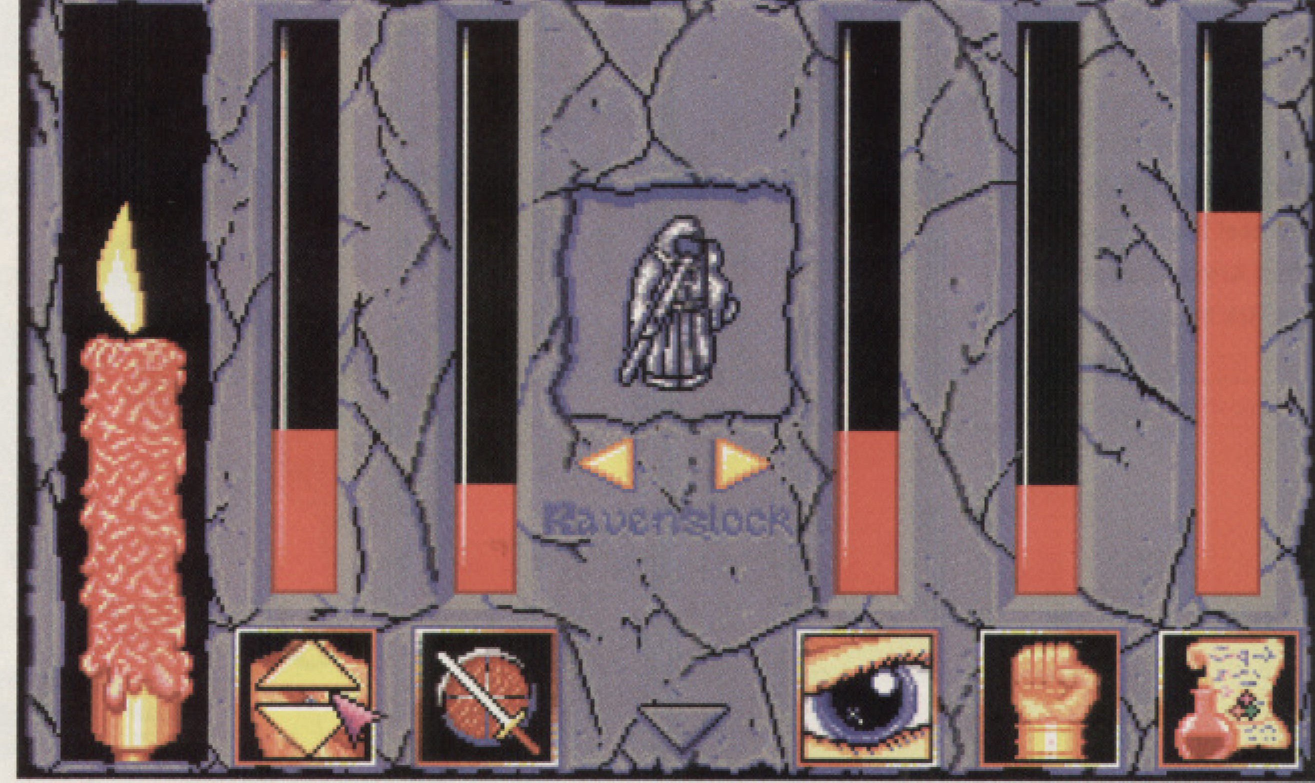
It's usual for a software house to actually ask you, the public, what you want improved in a game and we hope more softcos take note. Did the gamers' opinions reflect those of the programmers? "Yes, pretty much so. I personally would have improved the combat and maybe tried to speed the game up as a whole - which is basically what we've done with HeroQuest 2.

"The game is now a lot bigger too; each level in the original HeroQuest was a completely different quest and so there was no continuity in the game. In HeroQuest 2, however, there's an overall task and successfully completing each of the missions goes some way to achieving this. It's far more engrossing like this. Graphically, it's much brighter. We're still using thirty two colours like the original but their choice of palette was really dull."

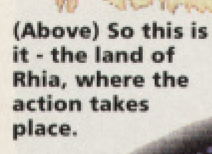
Committed HeroQuesters will be pleased to know that apart from the combat sections of the game, everything else is pretty much as in the original. You have to select a party of four heroes and send them forth deep into uncharted territory, doing battle with the evil do-badders and generally saving the day. At the beginning of each 'turn' you have a set number of points with which to perform whatever actions you like, but every time you tell a character to do something this total depletes and when you run out of these action points, it's time to switch to another hero or end your turn and watch the monsters try to attack you.

Was Kevin given the option to re-use some of the original HeroQuest's code? "I started programming from scratch although I did have the option to look through the original code. Anyway, there are so many differences between the two games that it would have been more trouble that it was worth to re-use any part of the original game-engine. For example, The Legend Of Soracil scrolls as you move through the landscape whereas HeroQuest was flick screen. It's easier to start from the beginning rather than introduce new routines like that."

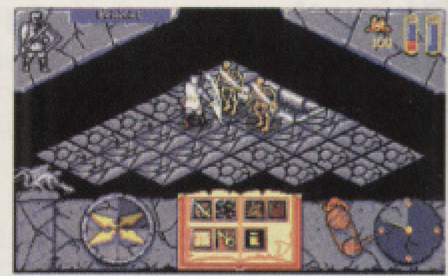
With a game as popular as HeroQuest, it must be hard writing the sequel as you know that there are



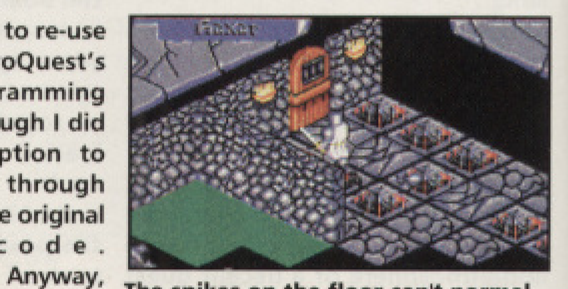
You'll be able to adjust your characters' attributes before you set off by moving the candle up and down, increasing or decreasing certain powers like strength, perception and psychic energy.



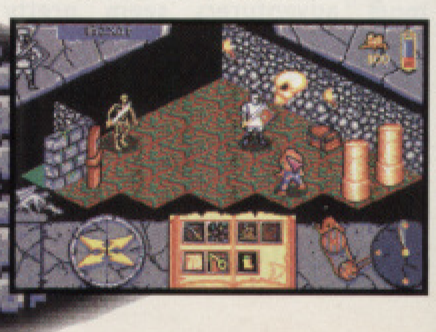
(Above) So this is it - the land of Rhia, where the action takes place.



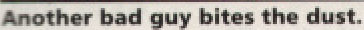
Each of the icons in the spellbook relate to certain actions that heroes can perform.



The spikes on the floor can't normally be seen but the use of a 'detect traps' spell soon reveals all.







Another bad guy bites the dust.



The evil vampire figure casts a spell.



Some doors aren't immediately obvious but you'll know when there's a secret gateway waiting to be found by looking at the passages beyond.

certain expectations to live up to. Just how tough is it? "As far as I know, the original didn't sell very well at first but it continued selling at a steady rate and still sells even today. I'm not really worried by the original's success but it's constantly in the back of my mind."

As you probably know, most major licensing deals require the licensee's approval over many aspects of the game, from the gameplay as a whole right down to individual characters. MB Games have been quite involved with The Legend of Soracil, as Kevin explains: "MB Games have to see everything and they're quite strict. We have to send them new versions of the game every now and then, they'll look at it and say 'We can't have this because of this' and then we'll implement the changes. We were originally going to have some gore in the game but they had to be altered when MB saw it and the Paladin was initially going to have a cross on him but that also had to be taken out because of the Muslim countries or something."

Artificial intelligence seems to be almost fairly commonplace nowadays. Does The Legend of Soracil maintain this trend? "Some of the monsters do have a little bit of artificial intelligence. First, each character will look around the room to see if there are any heroes in there and if so then they'll go to attack them. Because they have to move around the various objects in the room, there's a routine which influences their choice of route to the heroes. When a hero is directly behind a monster then the monster will have to decide which way to go by working out every possible route to the hero and then deciding which one is the best."

"The artificial intelligence took me about three weeks to work out and has been the hardest part of the game so far. There are still a few flaws to iron out; some of the characters run at you and then immediately jump back, which looks a bit ridiculous but I'm certain I'll be able to fix it."

We've already talked about the difficulty level; too hard and people won't bother, too easy and gamers will moan. How tough is this adventure? "If you know where everything is and you charge straight though it then you can complete the first level in about half an hour. Of course, it will take a lot longer when you don't know what you're doing. I guess that once you've figured everything out and you know exactly what to do then the entire game should take at least nine hours to play through. The game is mainly aimed at new RPGers up to about average. The early levels may be a little easy for experienced players but it really does get difficult later on."

The prospect of playing through a larger adventure which gels together (unlike the original) should be more than enough to send Hero-Quest veterans into a foaming fit and the user-friendliness and gradual difficulty curve will ensure that would-be adventurers should find The Legend of Soracil as easy to slip into as a cosy pair of well-worn slippers. At the very least, it should receive an even warmer welcome than its predecessor, meaning it should be packaged in asbestos if it hopes to avoid charges of arson when it hits the shelves in the next couple of months.

PROJECT: Simon The Sorceror
PUBLISHER: AdventureSoft
DEVELOPER: In-house
Simon Woodroffe (Design)
Michael Woodroffe, Alan Bridgman (Production, Programming)
Paul Drummond, Kevin Preston, Maria Drummond,
Jeff Wall, Karen Pinchin (Graphics)
Adam Gilmore (Music)
INITIATED: Late 1992
RELEASE: September 1993

SAUCY S

AdventureSoft reckon their new graphic adventure is going to make a monkey out of certain pirates (yo-ho-ho!). Gary Penn talks to the men behind the magic.

Look, forget the limited illustrated text-based adventures such as The Incredible Hulk and Gremlins. Ignore, if you can, the unremarkable pseudo RPG adventures with Elvira. After a decade in 'the biz', the AdventureSoft team are about to come of age with an adventure in the style of Monkey Island et al. It's called Simon The Sorceror.

"Simon The Sorceror is a comedy fantasy," explains industry veteran Mike Woodroffe, one of Simon The Sorceror's programmers. "I've always wanted to write a game that made people laugh - there have only been two so far: Hitchhiker's and Monkey Island. They were so entertaining. The best thing about doing a fantasy adventure is that you can do anything you want and it doesn't matter. You don't have to have reasons for things."

Like Simon's hat? "Exactly." You see, Simon stores everything he collects, regardless of its size, in his magic hat. It's a neat way of explaining how he manages to carry all that stuff around without a bloody big knapsack and severe back problems.

"Simon The Sorceror has been fun to do - it's certainly the most entertaining project I've been involved with so far," continues Mike. "I haven't got sick of it yet and it's nearly finished."

Simon isn't actually a magician. He's yer average 14-year-old schoolboy who just happens to have inadvertently transported himself into a bizarre fantasy land full of magic, mystery, monsters, marvels and other alliterative words including mould as in the one used by LucasArts to create their distinctive adventures. And if you don't know what that entails that makes you a loser.

Adventure Soft took a look at the LucasArts' interface and decided they could go not one, not ten but a squillion times better. Even at this stage it's fair to say that the result is the most accomplished adventure of its type. Of course, whether the situations, humour and puzzles will be to your liking remains to be seen.

"We've developed our own language called AGOS," Mike reveals. "It took two years to write and this is our fifth game with it. When we find something it can't do, we add to it. It's capable of running any adventure product. We could even do arcade-style games but we don't want to. The great thing about it is you don't need to be a programmer to use it. Programmers can be a problem. AGOS also makes things easier to tune. We don't really get bugs as such. Any problems that arise can be sorted out in minutes because you can tell immediately where it's happened and why."

> **"Simon The Sorceror has been fun to do - it's certainly the most entertaining project I've been involved with so far. I haven't got sick of it yet and it's nearly finished."**
>
> **Mike Woodroffe, Simon the Sorceror's Programmer.**

The most immediate thing about Simon The Sorceror is it looks so pretty. And unlike the latest LucasArts stuff, it's clear-cut, fluid and doesn't slow down. It also doesn't feel as disjointed, and there seem to be very few situations where the player is left feeling distanced from what's going on. But enough of those reviewy-type observations. That's for the Autumn.

"We've used five real artists," Mike reveals. "They sketched out the pictures first as line art then we scanned them and then touched them up and coloured them in. The results are far clearer than digitised full-colour paintings and colour can be used more efficiently."

There are over one hundred screens to explore in Simon The Sorceror. You can expect to see an inn, a shop, a druid's hut, a blacksmith's, a wizard's cottage and garden, a good witch's house, a courtyard, a forest, a dragon's cave, a dwarf mine, a gollem's cave, a swampling's house, a goblin village... and more besides. To give the screens more depth, multiple masks are used to allow characters to walk behind and in front of



(Above) The original line-art for a scene at the troll's bridge. This picture is scanned, touched up and coloured. The result is cleaner and lighter on memory than digitising a full-colour painting.



A few of the troll's animation frames, along with the artist's original design sketch. As you can see there's very little difference.

And here you have it: The scene as seen in the adventure proper. Well, with the exception of Simon's absence.

objects and scenery.

There are dozens of distinguished characters to meet, too: members of the wizard's magic circle, Repulser the pig, dotty dragons, a giant, trolls, a mad old owl, deranged dwarves, a werefrog... and so on and on until Simon confronts the ultimate evil.

But what adventure worth its salt doesn't have puzzles aplenty to solve? "I've no idea how many puzzles there are exactly. A lot," says Mike. "There have to be. Our philosophy is once you know a game inside out it should still take a few hours to play through it. It's about offering good value for money. There are some adventures, mentioning no names, that you can solve in two to three days and that's unfair as there's no value for money. It may be pretty and sound good but that's it."

Surely it can't be easy creating puzzles with solutions that aren't too obscure or too easy or difficult? "No, not really," says Mike. "I don't find it difficult to do puzzles. You write them backwards. What's the player's objective? OK, now where will that take place? How will the player get there? And so on... You have to keep them logical and stick to conventions - for example, if you have a vampire, you know it's going to take crucifixes and so on. You also don't want the player travelling long distances to find objects, and you can never lead the player into situations where there are no ways out."

And what about the interface? It's

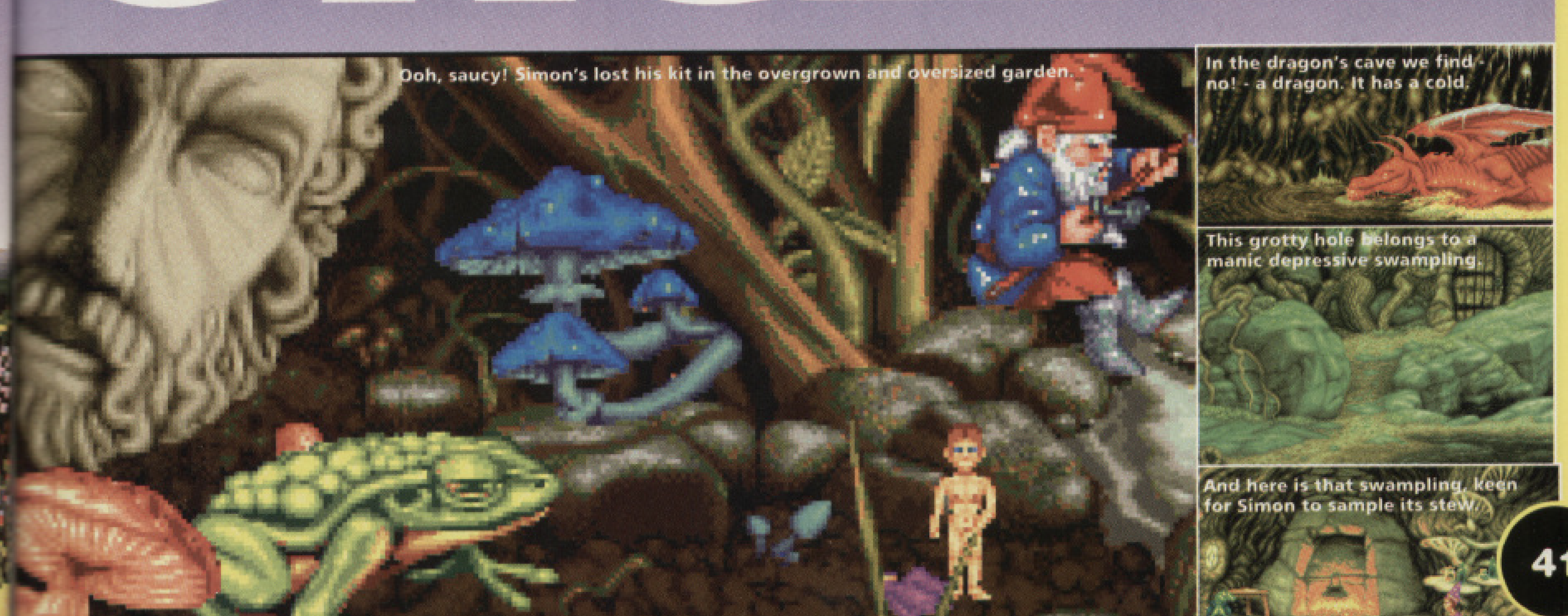


Two demons play dice.

not a million miles away from the LucasArts one... If it ain't broke, don't fix it is the reasoning here. "The interface has to be as simple and intuitive as possible. You have to think of the most basic, flexible commands. The player has to get around and be able to see what's what so WALK and LOOK are obvious. OPEN and CLOSE can be used in different ways so those are essential. MOVE and USE cater for other functions. Items of clothing are covered by WEAR and REMOVE. Eating and drinking are covered by CONSUME. TALK and GIVE are useful too. With those commands you can do almost anything."

Simon The Sorceror will probably come on six disks - compared to Monkey Island 2's eleven. "And it's a bigger game," says Mike. An A1200 version is a certainty, with more colours and possibly a few extra treats thrown in for good measure. To find out if the Adventure Soft team have succeeded in beating LucasArts at their own game, tune in to the September issue.





Ooh, saucy! Simon's lost his kit in the overgrown and oversized garden.

In the dragon's cave we find - no! - a dragon. It has a cold.

This grotty hole belongs to a manic depressive swampling.

And here is that swampling, keen for Simon to sample its stew.

PROJECT: The Settlers
PUBLISHER: Blue Byte
DEVELOPER: Volker Wertich (Programming)
Christoph Werner (Graphics)
Haiko Ruttman (Sound)
INITIATED: January 1992
RELEASE: December 1993

SETTLE DOWN NOW!

Power to the little people! Blue Byte, creators of Battle Isle, have turned their attention to the God sim genre. Er, except you're not a god, you're a king. David Upchurch wears the crown...

"So what's The Settlers all about then?" I hear you cry. I don't know, which is why I put that very same query to Stefan Piasecki, Blue Byte's boss. "The Settlers is a game of thinking, building and strategy" was his answer. "The player has to choose the best place for his kingdom, has to carefully plan his moves and decide what 'jobs' his people should do. In effect you have to assume the role of a king, but there's much more to it than that. The Settlers is very hard to describe - you really have to play it for yourself (or, failing that, go ask the Queen about the business of reigning a country)."

In the interests of research I actually took Stefan's advice and gave Liz a bell, but she wasn't in. Settling for second best I played the actual game itself. The test version I tinkered with obviously still had a long way to go before completion but even so it's shaping up to be something pretty special.

It's not often that I get to use the word 'enchanting' to describe a computer game but there's no getting away from the fact that that's the adjective that best sums up The Settlers. As Stefan said, you are effectively the ruler of a small kingdom. At first all you have is a castle, but using your limited resources you can build roads into the surrounding area. From these roads you can then establish small settlements to perform various functions. Builders will then trot out from the castle and start construction. Then, when construction work's finished, someone will leave the castle and set up home in the newly-built house.

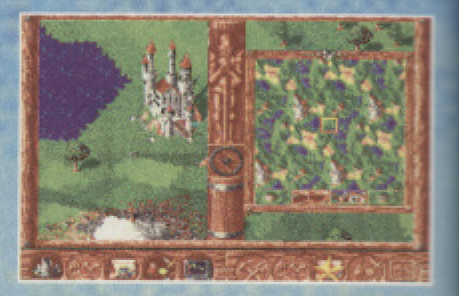
The beauty of The Settlers is that, once the wheels have been set in motion, you can watch every stage of development. You'll see workers walking backwards and forwards between the building site and the castle carrying bricks and planks of wood. Then, when the building's inhabited you'll see the inhabitant go about their daily business. So, if you've built a corn farm you'll see the farmer tend the crop and harvest it in autumn. Or, if you've built a lumber yard, you'll see the woodsman go out into the woods, chop down trees and then bring them back to the yard. It's gorgeous.

All the jobs are vital, as you need to make food, timber, bricks and so on to keep your community ticking over. Then, once you've developed a firm base, you can start thinking about expansion. At first you're only allowed to build within a limited radius of your castle but by building troop garrisons you can extend the boundaries of your kingdom, giving you more room to grow.

There are roughly 60 levels planned. The early ones will have simple victory conditions, such as generate a certain amount corn, that kind of thing. Later levels, however, will introduce computer-controlled opponents, up to a maximum of three, each of whom have











their own plans for world domination. Conflict is, sadly, inevitable...

Development-wise it's been a long haul for The Settlers. Work began on the game early in 1992. Why such a lengthy development time? "The reason is due mainly to the enormous amount of data that had to be inputted," explains Stefan. "The Settlers isn't like most games where the player has just one or two characters to guide through the game. The Settlers' world is a unique place with the all the elements of the real world.

"Every aspect of The Settlers represents the latest developments in game design. Everyone involved is trying to do their best, which is another reason for the long development time."

So what were the biggest tasks that the programmer Volker Wertich faced in developing the game? "You mean what made Volker really sweat?" asks Stefan. "Well, apart from his thick jumper it was getting the computer to understand supply and demand and check which goods are being made and where they have to go to. If there's a windmill next to a farmer, say, the program has to check whether that mill has the capacity to grind his corn. If not, the corn must be taken to another mill. But what if the street is crowded? The computer then has to work out the best route for the farmer to take his goods. Which is much like the way real life works.

"Everything the human player doesn't do, the computer has to do," Stefan continues. "The people do their daily work on their own as long as the player doesn't give them orders. Essentially you have to create a computer player to aid the human player. Then you have to create a powerful computer opponent to play against. It's a lot of work for the computer as it has to manage all its little people and take military and economic considerations into account as well. As the game runs in 'real time' it can't slow down when a lot of things happen on-screen at once. Volker deserves a lot of praise for managing to do this."

So how many little people can

"The Settlers is very hard to describe - you really have to play it for yourself (or, failing that, go ask the Queen about the business of reigning a country)."

Stefan Piasecki, Blue Byte's boss.

you have running around at once? "This depends on the power of your computer. On a normal Amiga it's around 8000 people. On the A1200 the number of people is about 16000. With extra RAM and turboboards it go up to 64000 people. Don't forget that you can watch and control every one of these people."

Christoph Werner, The Settlers' graphic artist has had his own share of troubles, especially in respect to injecting life into the tiny people. "The biggest problem was the heads because they're the most unique part of the body," says Stefan. "The space to draw in was only 5x5 pixels big and in there Christoph has to draw different heads to show each person's job. There are twenty different jobs and five types of knight so you can imagine the amount of work he had to do to make them all recognisable. It's wonderful how he's managed to give each person their own unique character."

Thanks to the team's hard work there will be little difference between the PC and Amiga versions. "Blue Byte always tries to do the best," explains Stefan. "The Amiga version won't run any slower than PC one. Although the PC game uses 256 colours the Amiga version uses the 64-colour half-brite mode. The sound is likely to be better on Amiga as well."

The Settlers has a familiar look about it. Were the programmers influenced by any other games? "Well, that's a pretty question! All human thought is influenced by the surrounding society and culture so you could say that everything is inspired by something. Every book, every film and every computer game has been done in some way before - the important thing is to do it better. Some will say they have seen elements of The Settlers before but when they play it they'll find it's unique in every respect."





Even so, it has to be said that, cosmetically at least, The Settlers looks very similar to some of Bullfrog's games. What's different about The Settlers compared to, say, Populous or Powermonger? "That's an easy question to answer - everything!" laughs Stefan. "In both Populous and Powermonger the player has complete control over his forces but that's all. In these games the player isn't really a 'god' in the true sense. A real god should care for his people and enable them to live their lives as they want.

"The only thing that's really similar about the games is the player's view. That's not to say we copied Bullfrog, it's just that this sort of view is the one that's best for the player. There's much more to The Settlers than just clicking the landscape up and down and choosing from a variety of disasters."

PROJECT: Stardust
PUBLISHER: Bloodhouse
DEVELOPER: Scy (Programming)
Sch, Xray, Destop (Graphics)
Rib (Music)
Wanton (Disk system)
INITIATED: Early 1992
RELEASE: July 1993

A STAR IS

You may think a commercial Asteroids game is the last thing Amiga owners are crying out for in these days of super-modern arcade games but there's a new software house in town who intend to make us beg for theirs. Simon Byron finds out more.

Regular readers of PD Zone will know just how popular Asteroid clones are. If we receive such a game with the monochrome wire-frame graphics, pathetic beeps for sound effects and as much variety as the four times table then we'll usually disappear for a few hours and go all gooey as we step back to the days when men were men and games were games etc.

Of course, not everybody will find Asteroids as entertaining as us, especially younger gamers who can't experience the sad nostalgia trip that only us old people can. However, if you fall into this category then prepare to be converted - new foreign developers Bloodhouse have something very interesting just around the corner.

Who are these Bloodhouse geezers, then? Well, basically they are a bunch of programmers who have been involved with the demo scene for a number of years. In keeping with the scrolly message and 'greets' traditions of these megademos, all the programmers and artists involved with the games are using their tag names, so if you're wondering what kind of parents would call their kids Sch and Destop then wonder no more.

The basic story behind Stardust is nothing startlingly original. Some evil professor with a dodgy name has decided to destroy the universe and kidnap some voluptuous girly. And, surprise surprise, you've decided to save the galaxy on your own with nothing more than a spaceship armed with some awesome firepower.

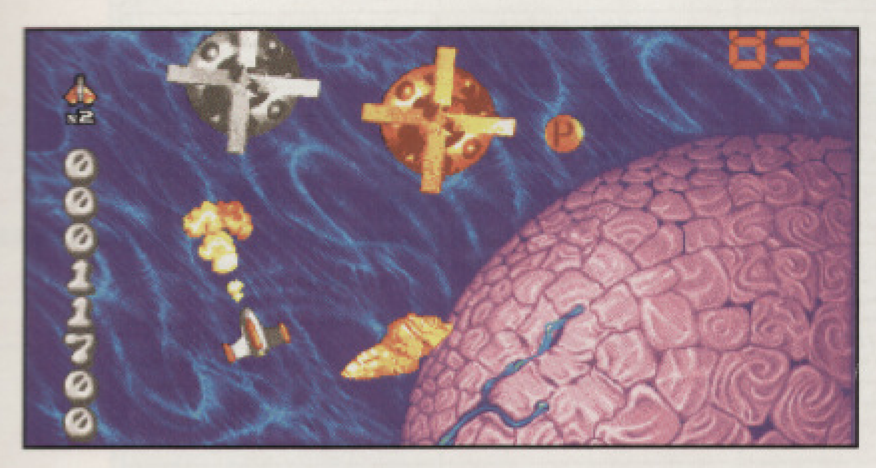


All of Stardust's enemies were created using a ray tracing package and static pictures can't do them any justice.

This may not sound like your typical Asteroids plot but Bloodhouse has added a clever plot device which means that there's rock-blasting aplenty in Stardust. The evil professor's agents have conveniently disguised themselves as meteors, you see, and each of the game's thirty levels have to be cleared before you can move on. Ingenious!

So what have Bloodhouse added to bring Asteroids into the Nineties? I spoke to Harri Tikkanen, Stardust's programmer. "Lots of ray tracing, extra weapons like homing missiles, flame throwers, plasma guns, oodles of intelligent enemies and very nasty end-of-level guardians," he enthuses.

So far, so good. But why choose 1993 as the time to redo Asteroids? "We think that there aren't any really good versions of the game on the Amiga yet - just hundreds of PD clones," he states. "And Stardust is not only a modern version of Asteroids, it's actually three games in one - besides the Asteroids bit, it has two different parallax-scrolling special missions and four different 3D warp sections."





Your spaceship is equipped with several different types of guns. The bog-standard shot is shown to the left whilst to the far left you can see a huge alien being attacked with the flame-thrower. There are often loads of things flying around but there's never any slowdown.

BORN

It has to be said that these 3D warp sections are some of the most impressive things we've ever seen. The view changes to show your ship from behind and you have to fly down a huge tunnel system containing thousands of enemies and asteroids. It's a bit like the trench section from the old Star Wars games but much, much slicker. Surely this must have been a problem to get working correctly? "Well, it did take a long time to get it just right. The graphics in this section are almost 100% ray traced, only the explosions and shots are hand drawn. All this wouldn't have been possible without Real 3D, so a big thanks has to go out to Realsoft."

Did they consider doing an entire game like this? "We have thought about it but there just isn't enough chip memory on the basic A500. We might do one for the A1200 with a CD drive, but that's by no means definite."

So what's been the hardest part of Stardust so far? "Playability! You can't do it just like that - you have to program a bit and test it, program a bit and test it... for ages! Playability is not just how the player's ship moves, it's how the whole game moves."

Not content with revolutionising the Asteroids genre, the team behind Stardust have focussed their attentions on a couple of often overlooked gaming aspects. Take the loading system, for example. How often have you sat back and thought, "I wish this would hurry up and load"? Loads, I bet. As we all know, tedious disk accessing can ruin a game and Harri is well aware of this. "We spent a lot of time on the disk loading system because we wanted to make the game as user friendly as possible. You can insert any disk at any time and the loader immediately knows which disk is inserted.

"Because of this you can remove a disk from any drive while the game is loading, insert it into another drive and the game will immediately continue to load from that drive with no time loss. There'll be no more 'Insert disk two in drive DF0:' messages. Our disk accessing system can handle 1004Kb of unpacked data and approximately 1500-1600Kb of packed data on a single disk. It's very fast and takes roughly 36 seconds to load in 1000Kb! It's the most advanced loading system we have ever seen on the Amiga."

> **"Stardust is not only a modern version of Asteroids, it's actually three games in one..."**
> J.P. Realms Of Darkness Project Manager

There's also a thumping rave soundtrack to drive the action on but rather than having your standard four-track arrangement, the guys have implemented an amazing routine which adds an extra two tracks of sound, bringing the total up to six, which is certainly a first, for games at least. How on earth have they managed it?

"Basically, the Amiga has four 8-bit sound channels and we've split two of them into four 7-bit channels. So what we have in Stardust is two normal channels which we're using for the music and the four 7-bit channels for sound effects. This does eat up some processor time, of course, but it isn't noticeable."

Just looking at the game statistics alone, Stardust is shaping up to be one hell of a blaster - it's already being called the Project-X of Asteroids (by me, anyway). What with rising prices, inflation and all that, how much would you expect to shell out for a game of this quality? Twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five pounds sterling? Not even close, mate. Stardust was originally going to be released for the reasonable price of £14.99 but because ELSPA classes games costing that amount as budget games, Bloodhouse have upped the amount a couple of quid to £16.99 as they are trying to ensure that Stardust isn't regarded as inferior in any way when compared to the full-price releases. "Our opinion is that the games are priced too high, and we should know because we buy them. With a price as low as £16.99 we are trying to reduce piracy."

With Stardust nearing completion (indeed, there'll be a full review next month), Bloodhouse has already started thinking about its next releases. First up will be an arcade adventure which apparently combines polygon and bitmap graphics and a beat-'em-up/platform game which uses a unique full-screen animation system. Look out for more news soon.



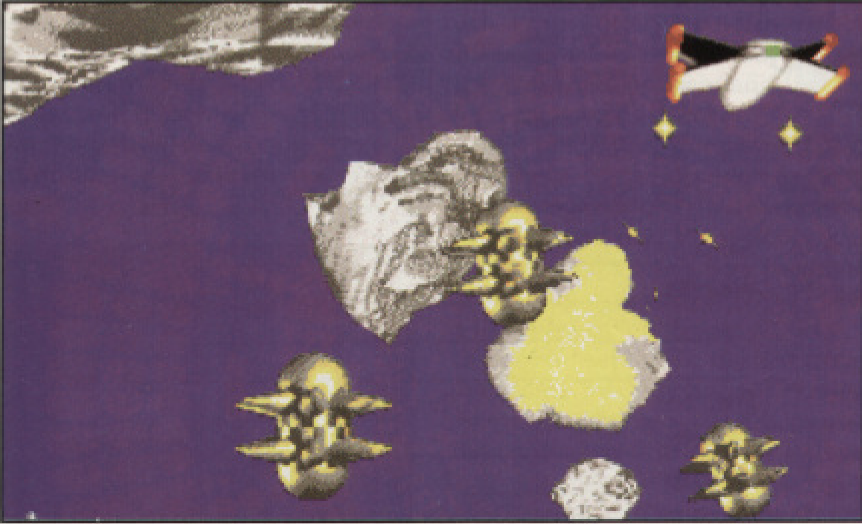
The 3D section in action. You won't believe this bit, honest.



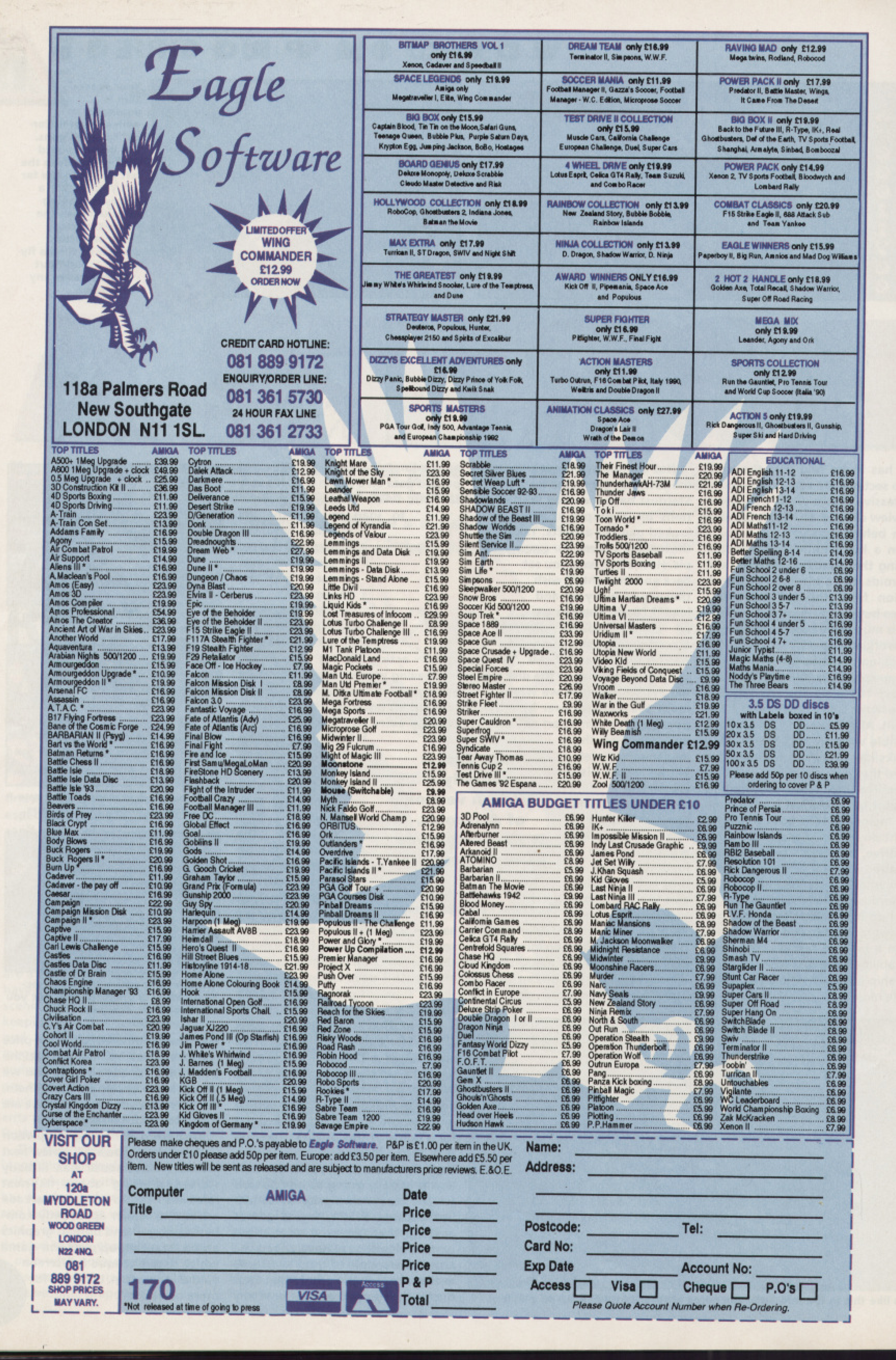
Each level is represented by a new background, drawn in 32 colours.



The speed at which the warp sections move is breathtaking, but you can't see that, can you?



Bits like this in the middle of the game ensure that you keep on playing...



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PROJECT: Blob

PUBLISHER: Core Design

DEVELOPER: In-house: Jonathan Hilliard (Programming & Graphics); Billy Alison (Graphics); Martin Iveson (Music).

INITIATED: September 1992

RELEASE: August 1993

SPACE HOPPER

Boing, boing, boing! What's that? It's the sound of Core's all-new puzzle game star. Simon Byron's listening...

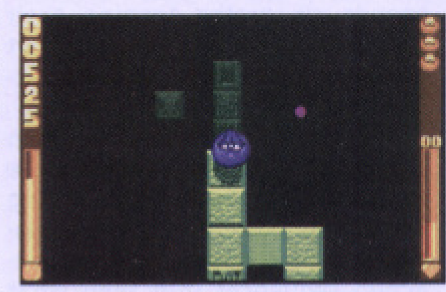
The main character has some pretty smart expressions and loads of animation frames. Here are just a few of them depicting all kinds of things from falling to his doom or just displaying his athlete's feet. All these sprites are drawn in sixteen colours using that ever reliable drawing program, DPaint IV.

Imagine, if you will, another dimension so vast you could fit two Paul Gascoignes in it. A world made up off huge tiled sections suspended in space from which the slightest wrong move will send anyone who's foolhardy enough to be leaping from platform to platform to their death. This is the home of Blob, Core's not-at-all Putty looking newcomer who is set to burst onto the Amiga games scene in a month or so's time.

Like Doodlebug, the Derby-based software giant commissioned the game as a result of a send-in back in April and have taken on Jonathan Hilliard, the creator and programmer, full-time, proving once again that Core's coding stables are a breeding ground for new talent.

It's a far cry from last summer when Jonathan was finishing off a degree at university, struggling, as students do, to make ends meet, not knowing where the next pint of bitter, please, would come from. It just goes to show how fortunes can change, doesn't it? One minute you're down, the next so high your nose starts bleeding. Jonathan explains how this came to be.

"I had a bit of spare time left at the end of university so I decided to write a game, which is what Blob turned out to be. I posted it to about ten different companies, had a few replies and interviews with people like Psygnosis and Team 17 and eventually decided to work for Core."



Working for a major software publisher like Core must be every aspiring programmer's dream. Is it everything you had imagined? "Yes, it's pretty good. The money's not too bad and it's a very friendly atmosphere. It's also interesting seeing what all the other programmers are up to."

What about Jonathan's old uni mates? Have any of them landed such a prestigious job? "Nope, no-one as far as I know. I do stay in contact with some of them and they're all pretty envious of me."

Let's talk about the game, then, for without this we wouldn't be here. The name is a bit, well, uninspired, wouldn't you say? What made you pick Blob? "It's funny how hard it is to come up with names. When I sent it in it was called 'Bouncy Thing'," he laughs, "which was the first thing that came into my head, because that's basically what the game is. Then it became Odd Blob for a while until we decided we had to have another name change. We all sat down, wrote suggestions on pieces of paper, had a big vote on it and Blob turned out the winner."

How would you describe Blob? "It's a 3D platform game viewed from above with a high puzzle element. Imagine Bounder, only with the tiles moving around instead of the ball bouncing all over the place. There are about twenty different heights of tiles you can bounce on and the idea of the game is to use these platforms to rescue all the little spods which are scattered throughout multiple levels and guide them to the exit."

This all sounds a little odd. What on earth inspired you to think up such a crazy game? "I don't know really. The game has a few of Bounder's influences, I suppose, combined with the fact that I wanted to do something a little different. I didn't sit down and think 'I really want to come up with something totally original'; I fiddled around with 3D systems, because that was something I'd worked on at university, and Blob ended up as being a 3D game with a difference."

How has the game changed from the original send-in? Did Core force you to make any alterations before they took the game on? "Not before they took it on, they left all that until after! The first thing they did was put Billy [Allison] on the graphics to give the main sprite more character. Initially he was basically just a ball with eyes whereas now he animates, spins around and shows his feet, things like that. They also added more aliens and generally put more presentation into it.

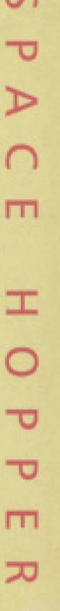
"I don't have to do everything they ask. We had a games meeting the other day where everyone made loads of suggestions and basically I can put in as many or as few as I like and hopefully make it as good as I possibly can."

The game is nearing completion now, what has been the hardest part for you? "The hardest part has been what I'm doing now - getting the game compatible with all the different Amiga types." And an A1200 version? "It's possible that we'll do an enhanced A1200-only version but I'm not sure about that at the moment."

Right then, puzzle fans, the bouncing begins in August.

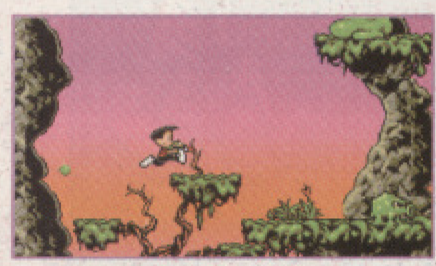


The levels are constructed from a series of specially-created tiles which are placed together using a special map editor. And here's something really interesting, the bottom row of tiles here have been constructed from the mask (i.e. solid dark) to make the seventh size. So now you know.



GLOBAL GLADIATORS

Virgin Games

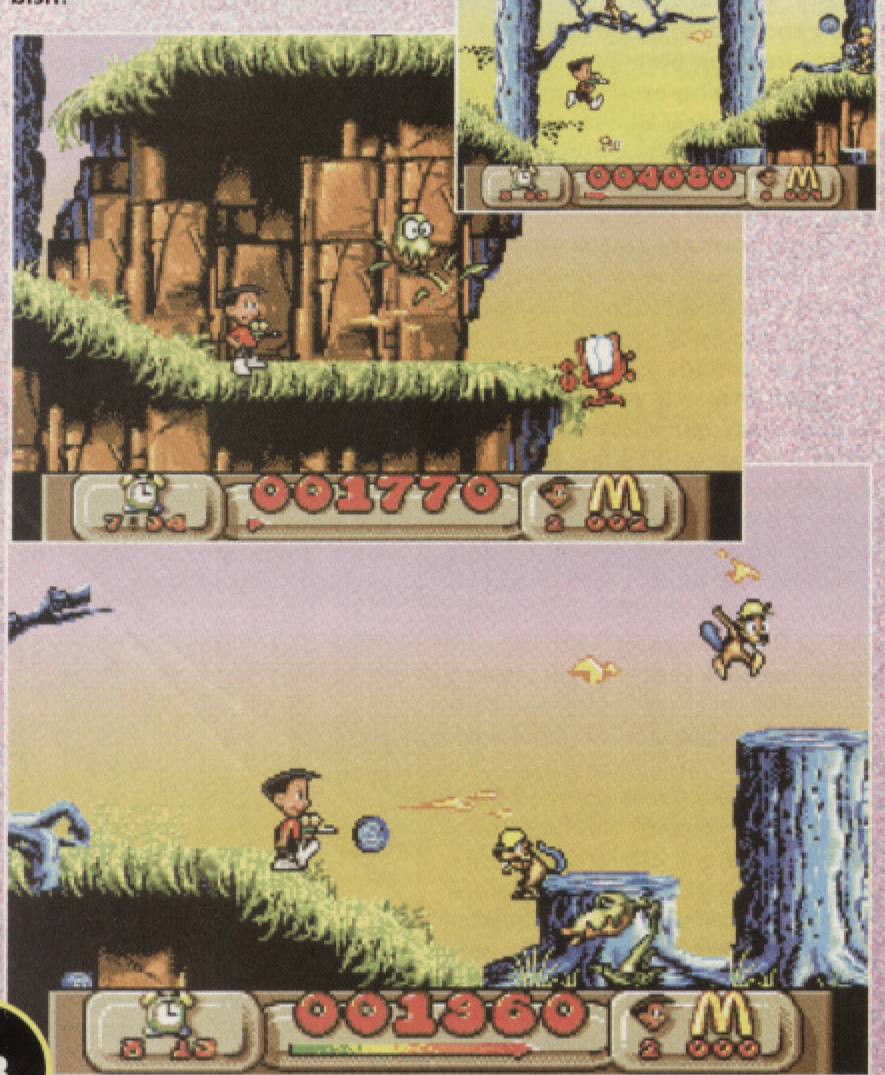


The huge merchandising machine that is McDonalds trundles on with the imminent second Amiga appearance of lovable platform stars Mick and Mack who enjoyed a mixed reception when they originally leapt onto our screens in McDonaldsland.

The story behind Global Gladiators is as equally preposterous as that of the twosome's first game. This time Mick and Mack are sitting in their local McDonalds, happily munching away on their meaty snacks and reading the latest issue of their favourite comic, Global Gladiators. They're just discussing the merits of being a Global Gladiator when along pops the not-at-all pervy Ronald McDonald (who tempted the boys with his 'magic bag' in McDonaldsland) and whisks them into the magical magazine land. What rubbish!

And talking of rubbish (I should be a DJ, you know), that's exactly what Mick and Mac are up against - loads and loads of the stuff. As they run, jump and fire their way through Global Gladiators' four pollution-filled worlds (a total of twelve levels), they must shut down the filth-making machines and rid the place of all the gooey monsters.

If you've already played the demo you'll no doubt agree that it's certainly one of the nicest platformers for a while and the two main characters are some of the most well-animated we've seen for ages, what with their numerous cute moves and expressions. In fact, the press release claims the game has 1250 animation frames in all but we'll take their word for it as we can't be bothered to count them ourselves. Anyone who fancies proving Virgin wrong will be able to check the game out within the next couple of months and, yes, there'll be a full review next issue.

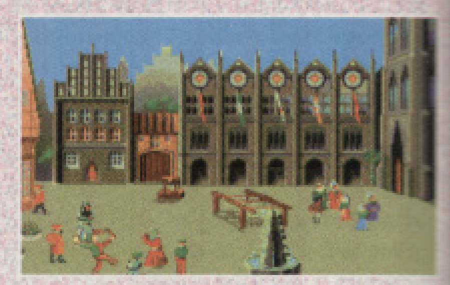




THE PATRICIAN

Daze

Far be it from us to accuse the Germans of being boring but you have to admit that, with the exception of anyone involved with Thalion who at least recognise that the software scene in Deutschland is a touch sterile, our European friends do like their strategy games as much as their Salami and any game which spends six moths topping their charts shouldn't really boast about the fact if it intends to repeat its success over here.



The Patrician is, then, the Brian Adams of the German charts and the prelaunch hype is already building fast and furiously. Combining a special mix of strategy with arcade-action sequences (but then what doesn't these days?) you have to climb the social ranks of Medieval Europe, from humble merchant to Alderman of the League, whatever that is, whereupon you'll win the game.

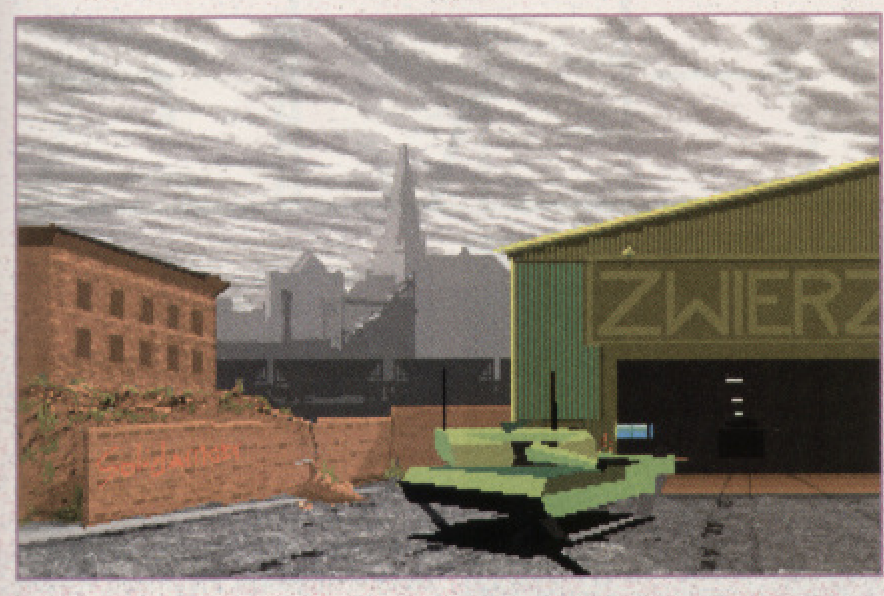
Along your treacherous and bumpy road to the top of the Hanseatic League you'll have to deal with back-stabbing folk who'll stop at nothing to stop you. This is where bribery and blackmail come into play - everyone has a secret and it's your job to find out what it is and use it to your advantage. Alternatively, you can buy the villagers by throwing huge banquets and donating large amounts of money to the local church. You see, there were no morals in those days either.

While its obvious that this kind of game has a very niche market, there's no doubting that with the right balance of trading and action you can't convert hoards of games-players to the religion of strategy games. From the early demos we've seen it's hard to tell whether The Patrician manages this but you'll be able to see for yourselves towards the end of August when the game is released.



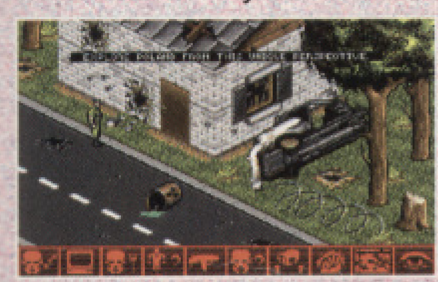
TWILIGHT 2000

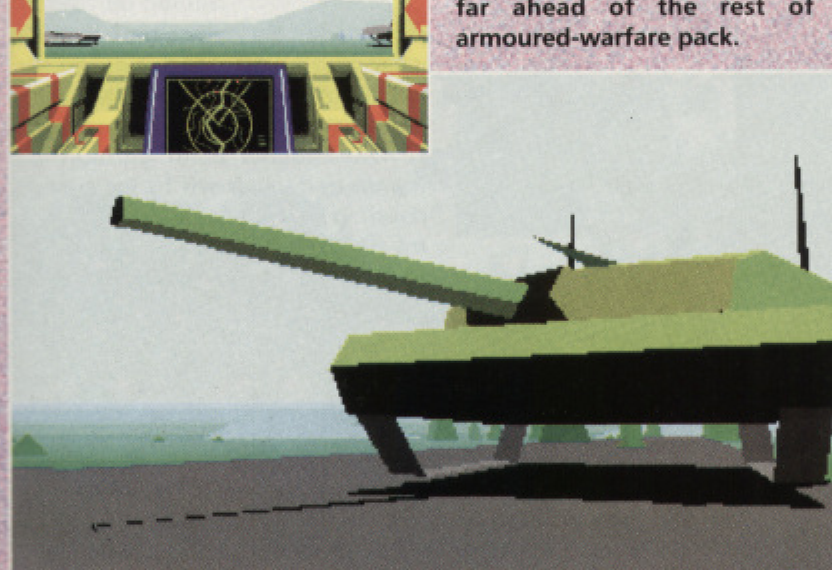
Empire



After Team Yankee, Pacific Islands and War in the Gulf, Empire have decided to take a new direction and release a game all about... um, tanks. Yes, thanks to Twilight 2000, once again you'll be able to take command of huge metal boxes and drive across landscapes blowing things up.

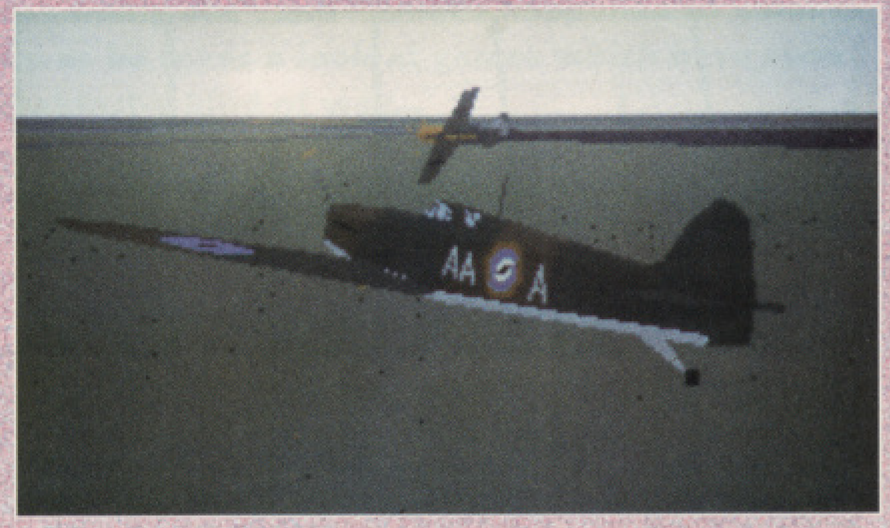
But before you roll over, switch off the light and go to sleep, it's worth noting that Twilight 2000 actually promises a few innovative features which should set it apart from the run-of-the mill tank sims. First, there's a snazzy isometric-3D section where you can control individual blokes as they strut about the place, meeting people and making friends (as well as emptying a few brains onto the pavement), which looks like a lot of fun.





Obviously the core of the game is the 3D tank simulation and it is on this area alone that the game is likely to be judged. Hooray, then, for the second reason why the game is going to be fairly sexy; detailed graphics with, sit down now, 256 colours - well, on the A1200, anyway. Not even the PC original (released last year, fact fans!) had that many. In fact, there are many areas in which the Amiga version far exceeds its Pee See counterpart, including a much smoother frame rate. 386s and endless RPGs - who needs 'em?

There's an ancient saying from Empire which goes something along the lines of "You can never have too many tank simulations" and if you'd told us that a few months ago then we would have disagreed. But, being the ever open-minded fellows we are, we're looking forward to Twilight 2000 because, on paper at least, there should be that little something about it which will put if far ahead of the rest of the armoured-warfare pack.







DOGFIGHT

MicroProse

Everybody knows that the only reason flight sims are so popular is because most gamers like being able to take to the skies and let rip with a variety of death-inducing weapons. If you stripped back most of the options and the supposed strategic elements of most recent plane games then what you'd be left with is something amounting to little more than a 3D shoot-'em-up. Forget concentrating on realism, most people are in it for out-and-out destruction.

And finally, it seems, the major player in the flight sim park, MicroProse, has realised exactly that. Their next game drops all pretence of being a serious simulation and pits biplane against Harrier, Spitfire against Sopwith Camel and any other combination you'd care to dream up (as long as it involves two the twelve planes featured). Whilst you may think that an antiquated World War One fighter may not stand a chance against something as advanced as an F-16A Fighting Falcon then think again. When you consider that the F-16A's strength lies mainly with the use of heat-seeking missiles and that biplanes didn't exactly emit boiling-hot trails of steam then you can see that a contest between the two wouldn't necessarily be as one-sided as you'd first imagine.

The game is some way off at the moment because work on the Amiga version isn't far into development (the graphics you see plastered around the page are taken from the PC version, which has just been completed) but we thought the idea was so novel you all had the right to know and the opportunity to start saving those pennies. Look out for Dogfight sometime towards the end of the year and, of course, more news if and when



WHERE



...CANNON FODDER?

The suspicious death of honest newspaper figurehead Robert Maxwell nearly claimed many software victims but none more important than Cannon Fodder, Sensible Software's "strategy wargame with a wacky twist". The nutty coders announced their four-game deal late in 1991 which included Megalomania 1 and 2, an "as yet untitled soccer game" (what could that have been?) and Cannon Fodder.

When the vast-one's software house went into liquidation, Virgin stepped in and announced that they would be publishing Sensi's 'intelligent' gaming experience.

Since then we've heard nothing.



Sure, there have been a few Work In Progresses, the odd recirculating press release and numerous release dates bantered about but nothing, well, concrete. Just how long does it take to write games nowadays? The public need to be informed.

Who better to ask than Sensible Software's very own Jools, programmer of Cannon Fodder? He was the only one brave enough to stand up and brace himself as I prepared to ask probing questions which delved so deep, the very core of the earth was exposed. Um, so then, Jools, just why has Cannon Fodder taken so long?

"The main reason why the game has been delayed is because I was pulled off the project to do Megadrive conversions of a couple of games. That's not the only excuse, of course. We've spent a lot of time rewriting several parts of the game so that it 'feels' just right."

What parts, then? (Cutting edge of investigative journalism, this.) "Mainly the control system. We were originally going to have loads of icons but as we altered the way the game played these icons gradually disappeared until there were none left. There was going to be a lot more control over each individual man; they were all going to have different weaponry skills which meant that on certain occasions you'd need to specify which bloke you wanted to do a particular task, like driving tanks, for example. It soon turned out to be a big waste of time so we programmed the computer to do it all for you. Now you can just jump into a tank and kill people"

So how else has the game changed from its original storyboard? "Storyboard? Ha, what storyboard? It hasn't really changed all that much, it's just become a lot easier to play."

Surely everything is running pretty much satisfactorily now? "We're getting there. The hardest part of the game has been choosing the right car. I'm trying to buy one at the moment and I'm having a few problems.

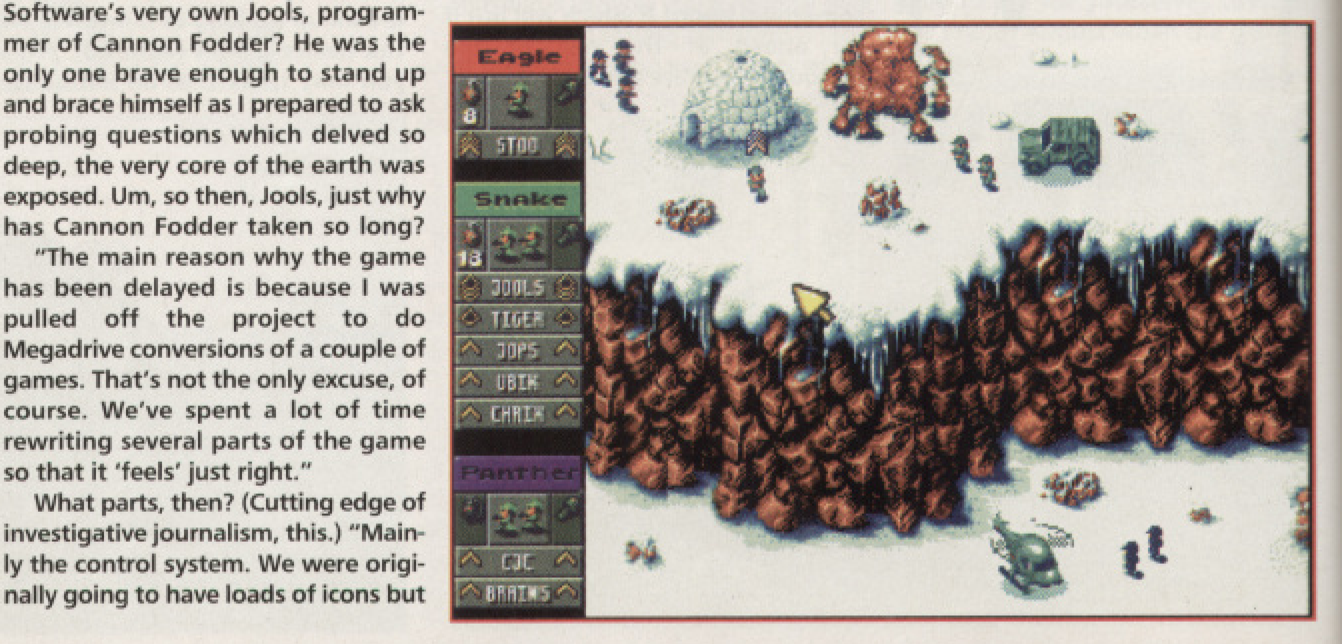
"No, the only things left to do at the moment are a couple of vehicles and a few static screens to change - one of the screens showing all your men going to war actually looks like they're in a ballroom. Then it's just a case of adding the map screen in and that's really about it."

Is it going to be worth the wait? "Definitely," enthuses Jools and then proceeds to say something which can only be described as damn rude.

So far so good but I know there are loads of people out there just begging for me to ask the question, the one which will remove all fears from our tiny minds and make life seem worth living once more. Okay, I'm all for that. Here goes.

Just when is Cannon Fodder coming out? "Sometime in September, I think."

It better do, mate.



We get so many letters asking "When's such and such coming out" and "What's happened to what's-its-face?" that we've decidedto act. Join Simon Byron as he takes a look at games which have spent an eternity in Development Hell and asks in a Big Breakfast-y kind of way...

ARE YOU...?

...APOCALYPSE?





You can't beat a good helicopter game. Actually, you can't get hold of a good helicopter game, mainly because the C64 version of Choplifter has been deleted whilst the Amiga version of Apocalypse still isn't out yet. But this is no ordinary tale of lazy programmers spending too long with their feet on the table and their hands in their pockets. No - there's much more to it than that and it all revolves around bobbing Rob Maxwell and his impromptu nudey swimming sessions.

For when Mirror Group Newspaper's top boy's trousers became so overladen with ill-gotten gains that his density shot past the still-able-to-float value of one, he not only took Cannon Fodder to the depths of the wet stuff but also the promising-looking chopper blaster. Enter once again prolific publishers Virgin and their huge wad of cash...

The shift to Virgin meant some mighty changes on the project. Original coders Strangeways split up so work on the game was continued by Miracle Games. Also Mike Merren, who managed the project at Mirrorsoft, moved to Virgin and carried on from where he left off. So then, Mike, just where is Apocalypse?

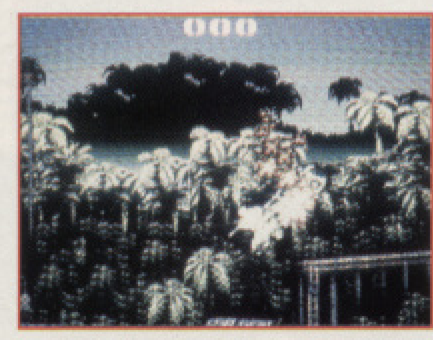
"It's effectively at final testing. Just a few more tiny tweaks and bug-fixes to go and we'll be duplicating," he details.

Good, that's what we like to hear. Tell us about the game's history. "When Mirrorsoft went down about a year and a half ago, the game was left floating for a while, which is when most of the delay happened.

"The gameplay was pretty much all there but it was improving on that which took most of the time. At that stage, four of the levels were designed with one of them still to be laid out. Most of the graphics were finished but the scrolling was not as hot as it could have been so that was what we set about improving. In this day and age, eight-way scrolling needs to be smooth."

Is it hard utilising someone else's code? "From a personal point of view, I'm don't know but from what people say it all depends on how well the original programmer commented his work. If programmers don't do that particularly well then when someone else comes along they can't understand it completely and a lot of the time they end up wondering exactly what everything does. The trouble is that most programmers only annotate a small amount of their code, mainly because they don't expect anyone else to be working with it."

> **"Choplifter was a great game when it came out and there's nothing to say that another game very much in the same vein can't be great as long as it has enough improvements and is up-to-date."**
>
> **Mike Merren, Apocalypse's Product Manager.**



Is the public still crying out for a Choplifter game after so much time in development? "Choplifter was a great game when it came out and there's nothing to say that another game very much in the same vein can't be great as long as it has enough improvements and is up-to-date. When you look at some of the games coming out now, most of them aren't player-orientated, they're very linear; you're taken down a route and you're given choices along the way. They're not video games anymore. Apocalypse really does rely on fast reactions to get you further into the game. It's fun to play and that's the main thing."

Does Mike think that the game would be radically different if Virgin had been responsible for it in the first place and not taken on a title which was already well underway? "To be honest I don't know. There are different things which could have been changed if other people had been responsible for them but at the end of the day I think the way the game is playing would have been the same had Virgin been in control from day one. The people working on it now are effectively the same people who were working on it for Mirrorsoft so I think that it would have turned out pretty much the same."

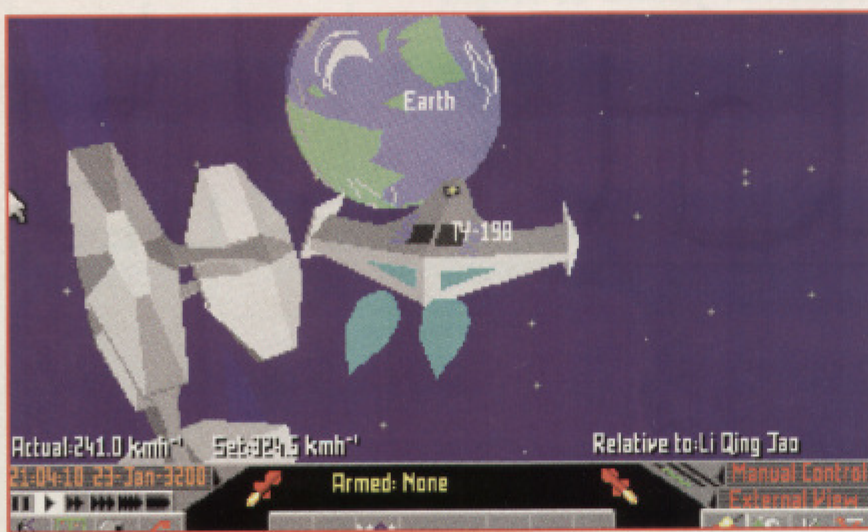
Unless Virgin is Mr Patience, you must be under tremendous pressure to finish the game. "Not too much, actually. Obviously the longer you spend on something, the more eager the publishers are to get it finished but I think that Virgin understand that we need time to get it just right. The majority of hassle has been from the public.

"The release date hasn't really changed that much since Virgin took over. I think we were originally going to be releasing it in May but God knows what it would have been if Mirrorsoft had still been in charge."

So, dear readers, it looks as if we are shortly to be put out of our misery. Just one word of advice, Mr Branson. Stay away from water.

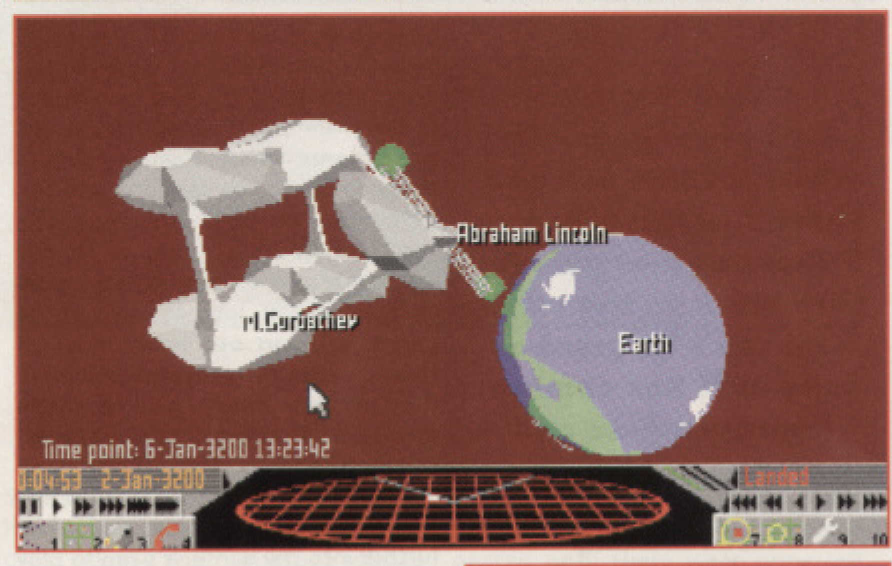


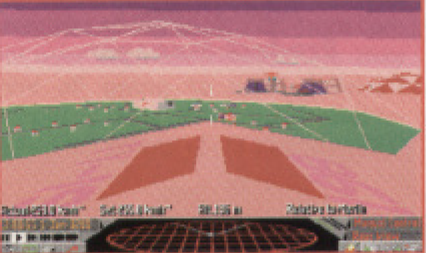
...FRONTIER?













August 1992 was a big month for Amiga game owners. The One's intergalactic exclusive (or EXCLUSIVE, as we put it) altered the way of life for all our readers and the next two instalments of the three-part Work In Progress Special was digested almost Bible-like by anyone who could breathe. Gamers were excited. There wasn't that long to wait, though, because Frontier "will be out in time for Christmas".

As we all know, this was a lie, just like the subsequent falsehoods which mentioned February, April and May. We want blood. A scapegoat. Someone who we can publicly shout abuse at. Ah-ha, who's this? Why, it's none other than Gary Penn with his Simon The Sorcerer WIP. Alright! How are you? Hang on, aren't you the Project Manager for Frontier? Right, son, you're nicked and you ain't leavin' this town until you tell me, Dave, Matt, Jenny and the watching public WHY HAS IT TAKEN SO LONG???

"Hmmm. That's a difficult question. The reason why it has taken so long is because, well, it just has. Without going too much into all the tedious facts and figures, when you consider that it's a simulation of a galaxy with 100,000,000,000 stars, perhaps it's not surprising that it's taken so long."

So what has David been doing to the game? "He's been adding things, tweaking things, putting extra missions in. The beauty of Frontier is that everything is structured so flexibly; there are lots of variables which can be easily changed - that's why they're variables, you see - and just by altering some of them slightly you can affect the way things interact with each other and thereby generate lots of different missions from a very small seed.

"It's difficult to put an exact figure to the amount of missions. When I first joined the project I played the game for a bit and thought

> **"When you consider that Frontier's a simulation of a galaxy with 100,000,000,000 stars, perhaps it's not surprising that it's taken so long."**
> **Gary Penn,**
> **Frontier's Product Manager.**

'Yes, this is really good' but after a while it suddenly dawns on you exactly how much could be done. The trouble is, where do you draw the line? You could keep on adding things for ever and ever but you do have to stop somewhere."

How much has changed since we last took at Frontier? "There have been a lot of refinements since then. The problem with a game as vast as this is that finding all the bugs is an extremely time-consuming process.

You're one of the few people who has actually played the game. What's it really like, then? "There aren't any words which you can use to accurately describe Frontier. Traditional and old-fashioned sound too derogatory but the thing I like most about it is that it's going back to when you used to pick up games and think 'Oh yes, this is really good'. What was suggested in Elite is actually realised in Frontier; things like being able to fly all the different ships - there are going to be some huge cruisers in there, which are really impressive."

Many people are worried about how fast the game is going to play. How quickly is it moving at the moment? "Fast enough, that's for sure. There are four levels of detail to suit all the different machines and on the lowest level on an A500 it's more than adequate. That's one thing which usually annoys me about most other polygon games - they're generally too sluggish."

What do Konami think about the game continually slipping? Are they giving you any pressure to get it finished? "There's not really any pressure as such. The thing with specifying and then moving dates is that the next one you specify isn't as flexible. We've reached a date when we know it isn't going to slip again."

Come on then, give us a release date. "The game is virtually there now. We've got all the music and sound effects sorted out, the intro sequence has been done, the logos and packaging are virtually there. It will definitely be out in September."

So there you have it, concerned Frontier fans. There's more chance of eternal world peace than Frontier not coming out in September, you heard it here first. Right Mr Penn, you are free to go now.

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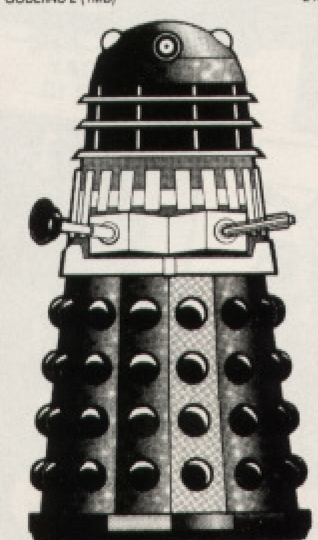
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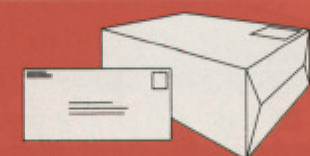
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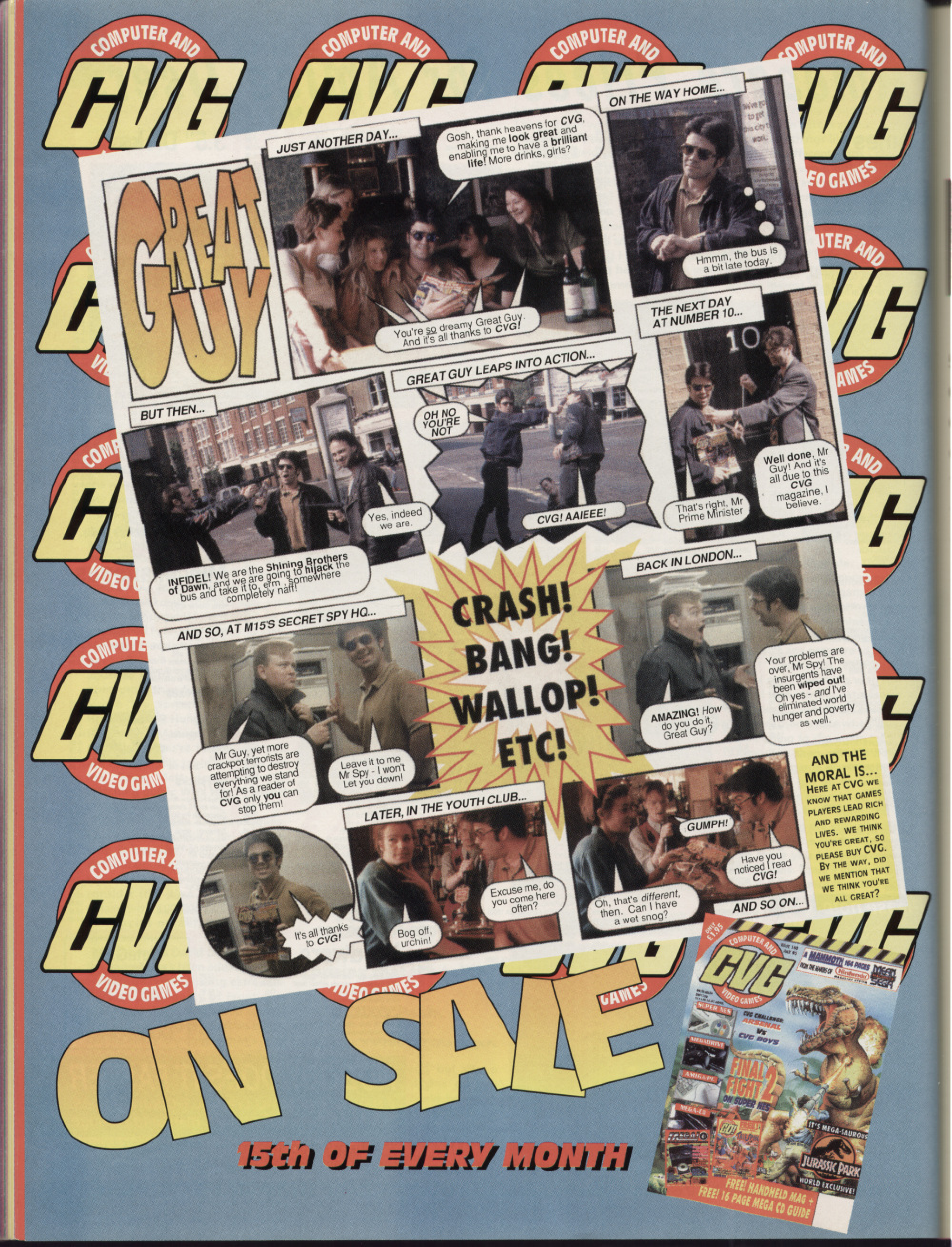
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GREAT GUY
JUST ANOTHER DAY...
Gosh, thank heavens for CVG, making me look great and enabling me to have a brilliant life! More drinks, girls?
You're so dreamy Great Guy. And it's all thanks to CVG!
ON THE WAY HOME...
Hmmm, the bus is a bit late today.
BUT THEN...
INFIDEL! We are the Shining Brothers of Dawn, and we are going to hijack the bus and take it to, erm, somewhere completely naff!
Yes, indeed we are.
GREAT GUY LEAPS INTO ACTION...
OH NO YOU'RE NOT
CVG! AAIEEE!
THE NEXT DAY AT NUMBER 10...
Well done, Mr Guy! And it's all due to this CVG magazine, I believe.
That's right, Mr Prime Minister
AND SO, AT M15'S SECRET SPY HQ...
Mr Guy, yet more crackpot terrorists are attempting to destroy everything we stand for! As a reader of CVG only you can stop them!
Leave it to me Mr Spy - I won't Let you down!
CRASH! BANG! WALLOP! ETC!
BACK IN LONDON...
Your problems are over, Mr Spy! The insurgents have been wiped out! Oh yes - and I've eliminated world hunger and poverty as well.
AMAZING! How do you do it, Great Guy?
LATER, IN THE YOUTH CLUB...
It's all thanks to CVG!
Excuse me, do you come here often?
Bog off, urchin!
GUMPH!
Have you noticed I read CVG!
Oh, that's different, then. Can I have a wet snog?
AND SO ON...
AND THE MORAL IS...
HERE AT CVG WE KNOW THAT GAMES PLAYERS LEAD RICH AND REWARDING LIVES. WE THINK YOU'RE GREAT, SO PLEASE BUY CVG. BY THE WAY, DID WE MENTION THAT WE THINK YOU'RE ALL GREAT?
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REVIEWS

July 1993

THE SCORES

All elements of our games are rated out of a possible maximum score of a hundred. But what do the scores actually mean?

0-25	**Rubbish. Offensively low quality.**
26-49	**Below average. Not acceptable by today's standards.**
50-60	**Above average. But still plenty of room for improvement.**
61-70	**Fair to good. Lots of nice points, but in no way perfect.**
70-80	**Pretty smart. Above accepted standards.**
81-90	**Extremely good. Top notch impressiveness.**
90+	**Simply excellent. Breathtaking.**

THE OVERALL SCORE

Obviously, at the end of the day, when all is said and done, the Overall figure is the best gauge as to whether the game is any good or not. While representative of the elements, it is not an average of the other scores. That's why it isn't called THE AVERAGE.

DAVID UPCHURCH

Dave's journey into work is usually swift and uneventful but one day during the last month disaster struck and the number nineteen bus he was travelling on broke down in the middle of the road. With no obvious help in sight, Dave began preparing for the worst by ripping off all the seat covers and trying to sell them to the other inconvenienced passengers as sleeping bags. It was only when he attempted to chomp off an old lady's ear that it became apparent that he'd been adversely affected by seeing the top film Alive.

SIMON BYRON

Far be it for us to ridicule the usually happy Simon but his behaviour this month has been nothing short of worrying. He's been arriving for work "fashionably" late, sitting down at his desk, putting his feet up and spouting on about how great last night's episode of Eastenders was EVERY DAY. It was only when Jenny pointed out that Simon had been to see Bill Murray's comedy classic Groundhog Day that it all began to fall into place...

MATTHEW BROUGHTON

Matt's been avoiding the cinema this month, mainly because there aren't any decent Patsy Kensit films showing at the moment. Come to think of it, we can't recall there ever being any decent Patsy Kensit films but Matt won't hear a word of it. Yes, it turns out that still enthusiastic Matt is, quite frankly, besotted with the British, er, 'beauty', so anyone thinking of mentioning the word 'fried' in the same sentence as 'eggs' should watch out.

JENNY ABROOK

Jenny has been playing up this month and has decided that every aspect of her job is worth an extra few quid up front. Designing pages costs a pony, scanning in additional artwork will set you back a monkey whilst searching for screenshots requires an extortionate zebra, whatever that may be. We'd like to have a word with Robert Redford because that Indecent Proposal film has gone right to our, yes, lovely Art Editor's head.



David Upchurch thought his adventuring days were over when he finally defeated the maleficent Krogh in Ishar but no! Once again evil is on the rise in this superb sequel from Silmarils.

ISHAR 2

Messengers Of Doom



(Below) Scraps with geezers like this are frequent in Arborea. It's a good idea to make sure you've visited an armoury and bought some weapons before you start getting tough and an even better idea to actually put the weapons in the combatants' hands - punches are useless. In the early stages the best thing to buy is a bow - this allows you to pick off the monsters from a distance.

The map can be called up at any time by any party member. To begin with you have map pieces for just two of the islands, the one you start on and the neighbouring isle. More scraps of parchment can be found as you adventure until you should eventually have a map covering all seven islands of the Arborea archipelago. Clicking on a piece of parchment brings up a more detailed map of that island with your party's location indicated.

(Above) Like any RPG, Ishar 2 has lots and lots of spellcasting in it. Only certain classes can use magic and, as the characters increase in experience, the more powerful the spells that become available to them. As a rule the more effective they are the greater they drain the character's magic-producing psychic energy.



Hello, what's this glass box (above) then? Looks like something a bit special. Try to pick it up, though, and you'll soon wish you hadn't as that causes the stone monolith behind it to metamorphose into a super-vicious golem (right). I first discovered this nasty while casually exploring just after setting up my party - within seconds it reduced them to bloody piles of flesh and bone. Suffice to say I won't be coming back here again until my party's substantially more powerful.

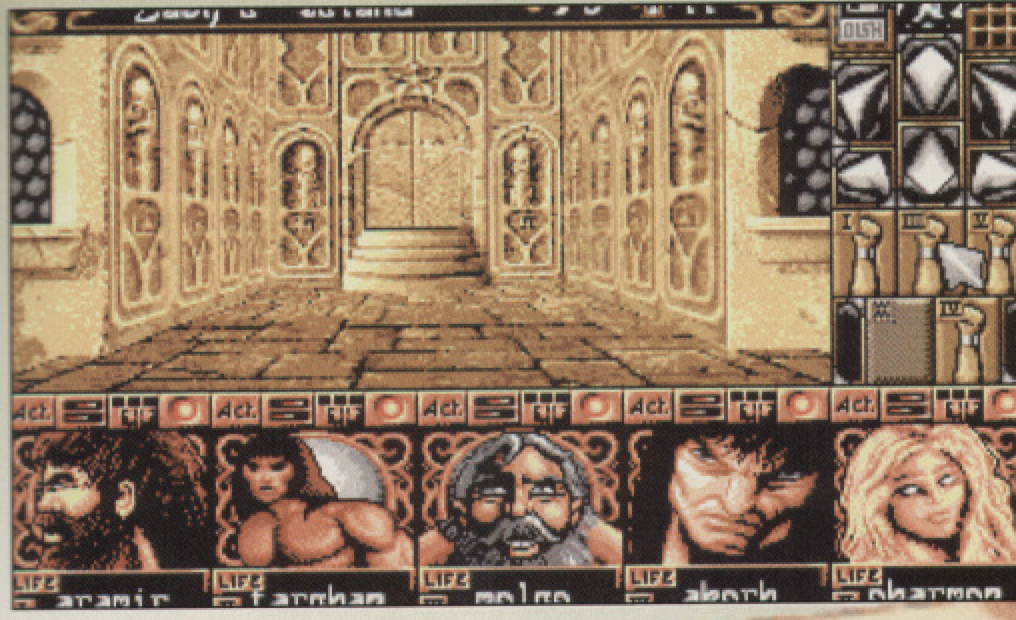
Time, as ever, marches on. Ishar, once a mysterious fortress haven to evil, has now become a centre for learning and understanding. Its benevolent influences have spread far and wide through the seven islands that make up the archipelago of Arborea, bringing peace and culture to the beleaguered land. It was as if the past never happened.

As the years passed, the many and varied inhabitants of Arborea forgot the dark days, when the demonic Krogh tried to enslave its forefathers. But evil never rests for long and once again dark forces have arisen, posing a grave threat to this era of good. Only Zubaran, the proud ruler of the city state of Ishar, knows of the danger and so he must set out, a party of brave adventurers in tow, to save his loyal people...

...In other words, it's your usual fantasy RPG scenario. To be fair Ishar 2's plot has a mite more depth than most of the others, mainly because it's not only a sequel, it's also a second sequel (of sorts) to the oldy Crystals Of Arborea. The writers have been able to draw on these past adventures and expand upon them, and this 'on-going saga' feel adds a touch more resonance to the proceedings.

Not that you need worry about that if you've never played either of those two highly-popular games before because the links with them are only storyline-deep. Certainly most players should soon feel right at home with Ishar 2's control system. It harks back to the days before the smooth-scrolling 3D of Legends Of Valour, when adventurers travelled the world in mighty jumps and were only able to turn in sharp 90° angles.

However, what Ishar 2 lacks in technical wizardry (no pun intended, though feel free to laugh if you want to) it makes up for with gorgeous landscape graphics, exciting combat, entertaining characters and sheer size - Ishar 2 is over three times bigger than its ancestor! But, we're constantly told, size isn't everything, so what's the game really like?



Travelling through the islands of Arborea is a pretty business. Although there are few innovations in the control method - the party can perform all the usual Beholder-style manoeuvres as jump forward, sideways and backwards and rotate 90° - the quality of the graphics is marvellous. Take a look at this location, for example - you'd think this was a still graphic.



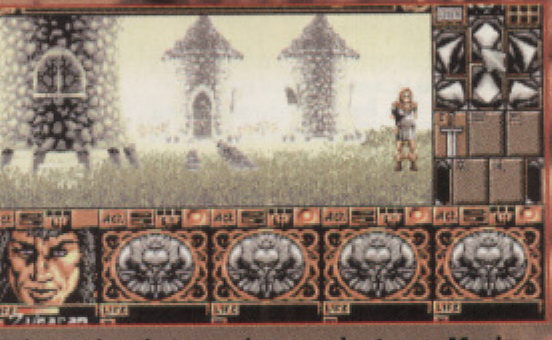
The people of Arborea are split into five racial types: human, elf, dwarf, orc and lizardman. To complicate matters, everyone you meet will belong to one of twenty-odd classes, including warrior, priestess, druid, spy and ranger. Each class has its own strengths and weaknesses and, as always in an RPG, selecting the right make-up for your party of adventurers is half the battle.

THE QUEST BEGINS...

Zubaran starts his quest for peace on Zach's Island near a circle of standing stones. Inside the circle are three ruffians standing over the body of a young girl. Zubaran decides to investigate...



Blummin' heck! These boys are tough! Cowardice being the better part of valour, Zubaran chooses to leg it...



Zubaran heads towards a nearby town. Maybe here he'll be able to find some keen adventurers willing to join him...?



The local tavern is full of the blighters! Selecting four of the toughest Zubaran tools them up with a selection of weapons at the armoury and returns to the circle...



Ha ha! No chance! A few quick sword chops and Zubaran and his party have soon sorted out those gruesome geezers. Now to try and help that girl...



Oh dear. She doesn't look too well, does she? And she's talking absolute gibberish. (Or is it?) But, as the last breath drifts from her body, she manages to give you a pendant...



Visiting the island's Chief reveals that his daughter's necklace has been stolen by a lizardman in the swamp. It's not the one you got from the dying girl, but you'll do anything to get in the Chief's good books so...



...Off you trot to the swamp. No sooner have you got your boots muddy than you're beset by nasties, including the necklace-nicking lizardman. Some judicious use of the bow and sword soon puts an end to him and the necklace is yours...

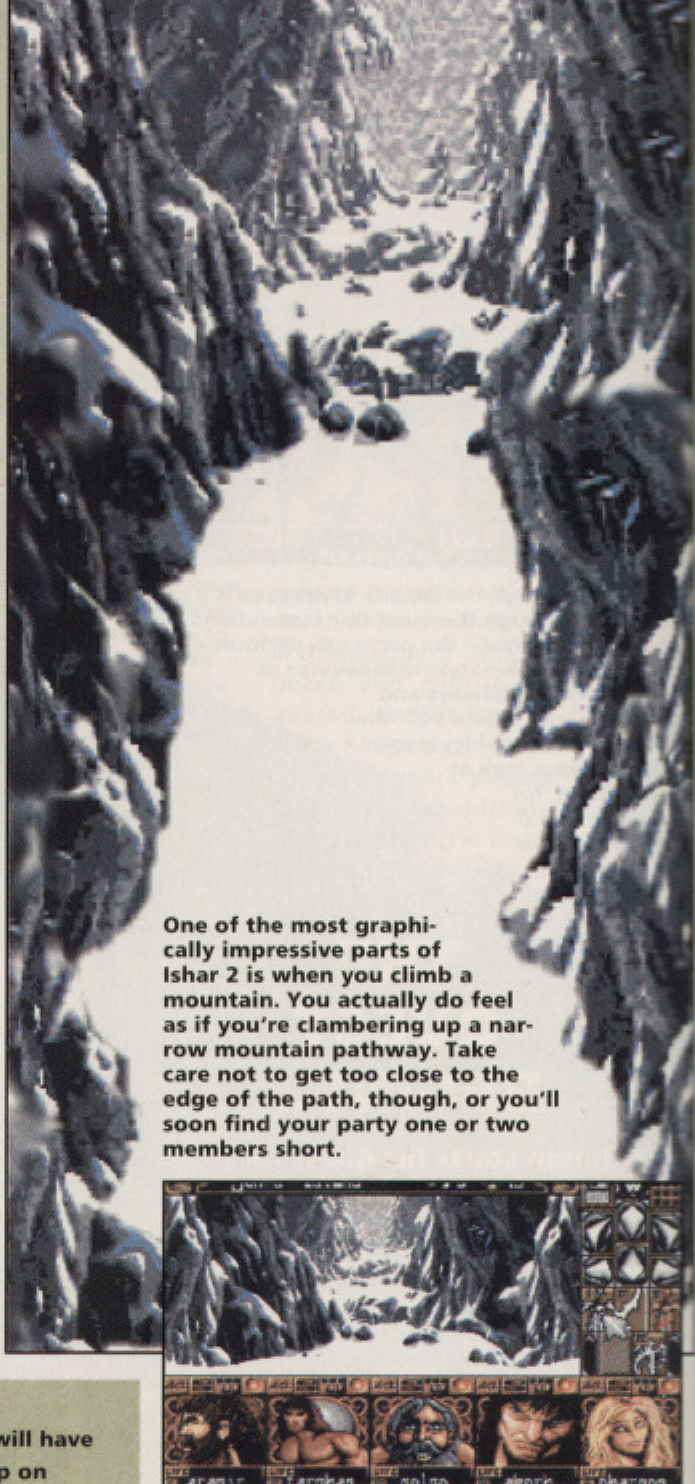


The Chief is overjoyed with Zubaran and the party's mighty achievement and gives him free use of his private ship. Now that the party are able to travel from island to island the adventure can really begin...



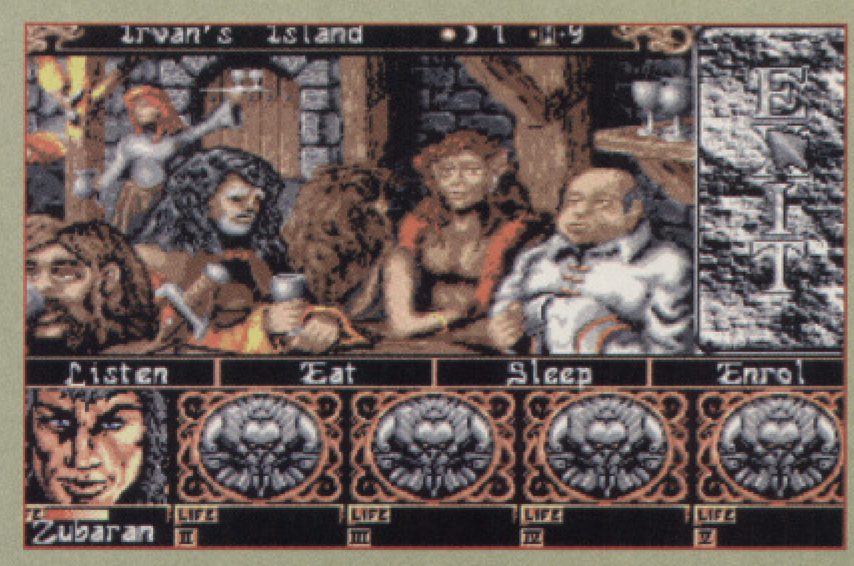
At key points in the plot you're treated to a cut-away still graphic such as this. They serve no real purpose other than to add drama to the proceedings, not that that is such a bad thing. Since these scenes are related to events that are pivotal to the plot's progression it's a good idea to take careful note of any information given to you during them.

Anyone you meet who doesn't try to kill you is a potential party member. The matter of recruiting people isn't as straightforward as saying "Do you want to be in my gang?". Each member of the party has a vote to say whether the new boy can join or not, their decisions tinged by their own personalities.



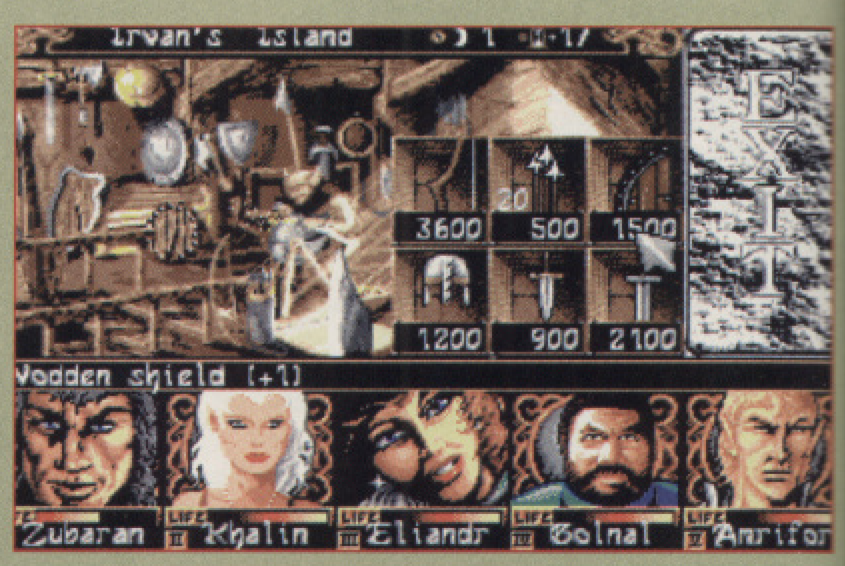
One of the most graphically impressive parts of Ishar 2 is when you climb a mountain. You actually do feel as if you're clambering up a narrow mountain pathway. Take care not to get too close to the edge of the path, though, or you'll soon find your party one or two members short.

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND, SIR...? Every settlement will have some sort of shop where you can buy weapons, get suited out with some armour, top up on spell ingredients or simply get a bite to eat. Here are a few of them...



THE LOCAL TAVERN

The boozer is a great place to pick up on local gossip, enjoy some food and drink and also get a good health-restoring night's kip. It's also the sort of haunt that would-be adventurers tend to hang out in and as such is a good place to go party recruiting.



THE ARMOURERS

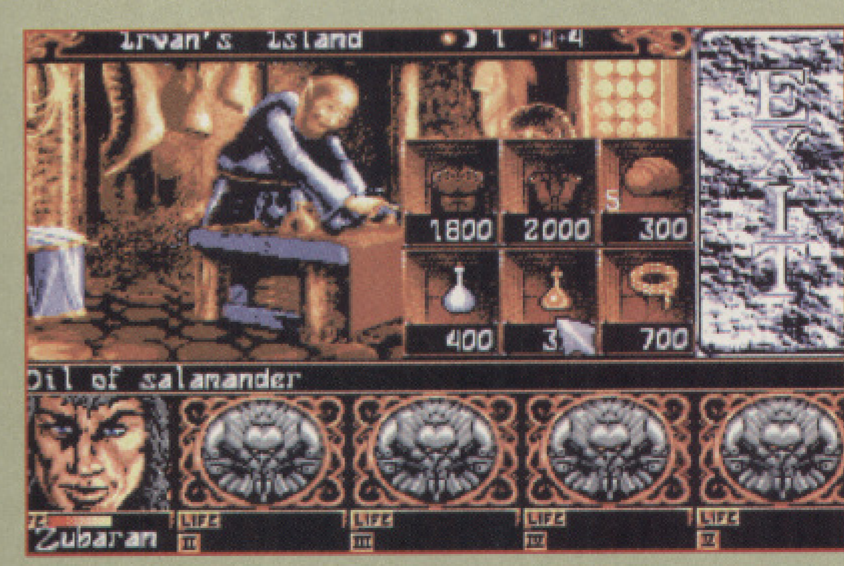
You won't get far in Ishar 2 without some sort of weapon and this is where you'll be able to get 'em. Each shop has a limited stock of goods and you'll probably have to visit a fair few of them before you manage to get quite the armoury you want.

(Below) One area of Ishar that has been improved for the sequel is the characters' inventory screens. It's now a lot easier to swap items between party members (just click and drag). It's also possible to dress up each adventurer using any armour or clothes you've bought by dragging the article onto their semi-naked bodies.



(Below) Just like the 'real world' day follows night just as night follows day in the world of Ishar 2. The onset of night means more than just a change in the screen's colour palette - for a start it's a lot harder to pick out minor landscape details and, more importantly, the shops won't be open, meaning you'll have to camp outside until the doors open like those sad types who queue up for the Harrods sale.





THE GENERAL STORE

As you might have suspected the general store sells general goods, like lengths of rope and flasks of bat's wing. Again the store's stores are limited - oh, for a medieval-style one-stop-shopping hypermarket or something.

THE VERDICT

I was a big fan of Ishar (and, if you don't believe me, why you can just go and dig out the review I did of the A1200 version in last month's Updates) and I was almost as impressed with this sequel. My main disappointment with the game is that Silmarils haven't really overhauled the game system that much. The 3D is looking a touch antiquated now although, to be fair, the quality of the graphics is such that you do get some breathtakingly gorgeous views and the mountain climbing bits are cleverly done. Granted, there are some improvements. For a start the player interface is more friendly now - having the combat controls collected together under the movement icons rather than spread out above each character's cameo is a definite plus. Also the mapping system is a lot more useful - in the first Ishar the map didn't even show your party's location! - making getting around much less of a chore than it used to be. However my main complaints have still gone uncorrected. It's still very easy to lose the thread of the plot and end up wandering around without a clue as to what you're meant to be doing. This isn't just frustrating, it's potentially fatal, as your aimless travels can often result in you meeting something you shouldn't have met until much later in the game when you will (theoretically, anyway) be much more powerful. This 'looseness' of the plot is a pity as it may put off the casual player. Those prepared to invest some time and thought in the game will, however, reap more than ample rewards.



A1200 Ishar 2 runs significantly faster and much more smoothly on the A1200, making it far more enjoyable to play. If you're prepared wait a while, though, there will be a A1200-specific version of the game soon, sporting lovely 256-colour graphics. Mmmm, can't wait.

WAR IN THE



Matt Broughton storms of to Kuwait to slap Saddam around for a bit in Empire's latest tank command offering.

With all the Gulf-related games that have appeared lately, you can't help but wonder if Saddam Hussein is actually on the payroll for a joint council of software companies, under a contract to be a git every now and then just to boost sales.

It's also strange, don't you think, that even in 1995 when this game is set, lots of people still drive around in big metal boxes shooting each other? If you think that this is normal behaviour then you'll probably enjoy War in The Gulf, which follows on from Team Yankee and Pacific Islands.

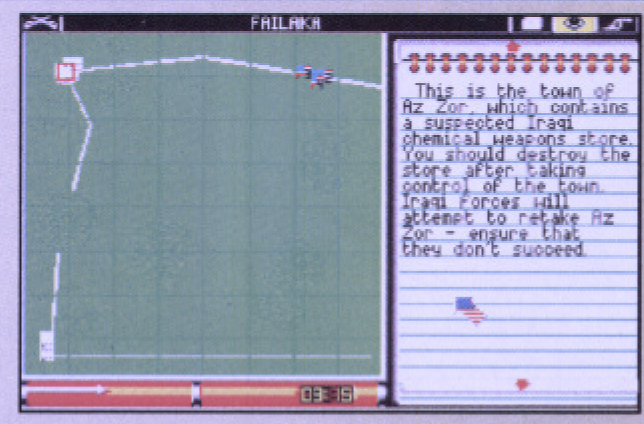
In the package are two tank-related picture postcards, a lovely map of Kuwait and two posters. Take one look at the poster of a lone soldier bravely facing danger with only 54.5 tonnes of iron and a bloody big gun to protect himself with and you feel a sense of pride in human courage. Then take a look at the other poster showing huge frightening explosions and flee naked to the hills babbling about love, flowers and not blowing people up after all.

Also included is a bulky 68-page manual that not only covers all technical and practical elements of the game but also gives facts and figures covering the Gulf War as a whole. But that's all in the past now - this is 1995 and President Hussein is reopening the territorial issues which were the cause of the first Gulf War. President Clinton strongly denounces this stand and at 09.15 tomorrow morning you will command Team Kuwait in an attempt to retake those areas of Kuwait which have been overrun by the Iraqis.

If you've played Team Yankee or Pacific Islands you already know what I'm about to say. If you haven't then come with me, close the hatch on your way in and don't touch anything unless I tell you to



First things first - pick your funeral. Here are the first three of the possible fifteen trouble spots. Move the cursor over one of the targeted areas to see what is required of you and your happy chaps. Got one? Right, off to the briefing room.



All mission details are given here. Each scenario generally features buildings, enemy tanks and road blocks to be destroyed. The individual tasks within each mission can be completed in any order or simultaneously by splitting up your four platoons.



(Left) You have four teams of four tanks under your control and you can keep an eye on each using this handy four-way split screen. In each window you can access all the information you'll ever need, such as damage status and map location. If you want you can even enlarge the window of one of the teams, to give yourself a better view of what they're facing.

GULF

All areas can be viewed from this map and tanks can be sent off to any position with the cursor. Speed and formation can also be chosen from this screen

Choose between available platoons.

Move around map.

Displays tank and weapon status.

Picks formation for current platoon.

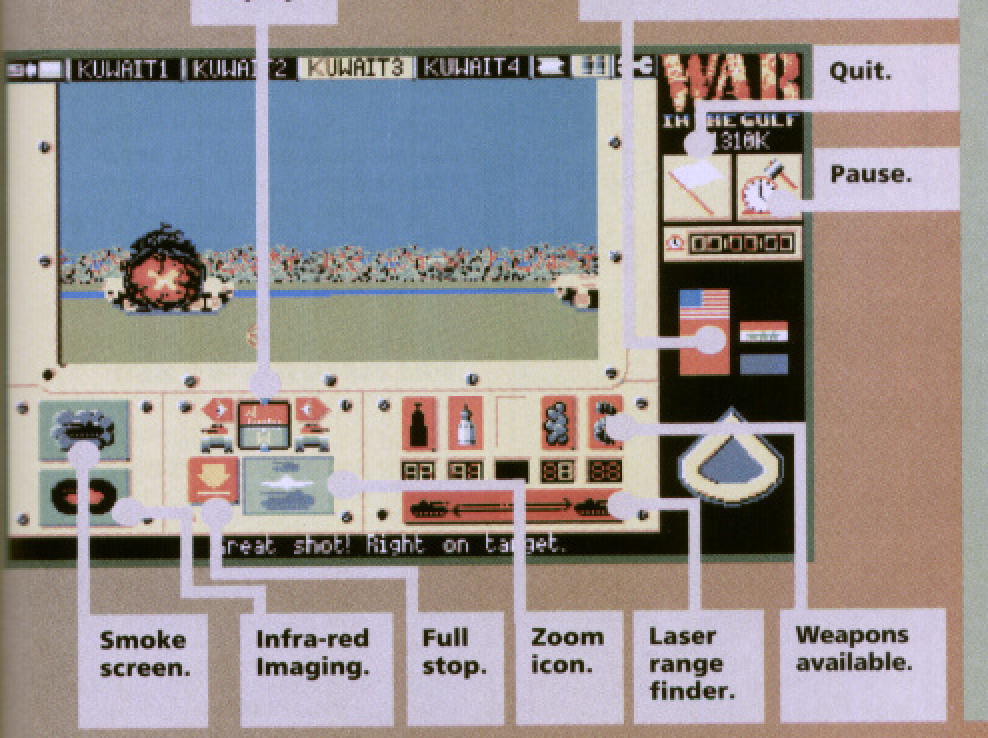
Swap between four-up tank-o'-vision and single tank screen.

Magnification on map.

Full stop.

Current platoon speed.

A full 3D view of the world is available, and can be viewed through 360° turret rotation and zoom. Infra-red can be switched on to cope with engine smoke and night missions. When encountering enemy tanks, select your weapon, cursor over the nasty and fire. Depending on your weapon, most tanks will burn after a few hits.



Rotation and compass display.

Strength histogram.

Quit.

Pause.

Smoke screen.

Infra-red Imaging.

Full stop.

Zoom icon.

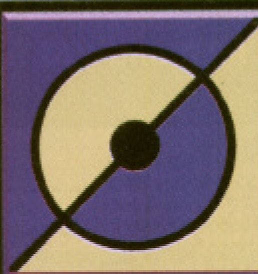
Laser range finder.

Weapons available.

THE VERDICT



I don't know what to say about this as it's so similar - well, exactly the same - to the previous two Empire tank games. I played Pacific Island quite a bit when it first came out and this is really just more of the same. There are no changes to the control system or anything else for that matter, which is great for experienced tankers as you can get down to business straight away but then you realise that you've just spent £29.99 on what could have been a nice little scenario disk for a fraction of the price. The graphics and sound have in no way developed either which would have been nice, but don't really effect a game of this type too much. The missions vary but all boil down to much the same gameplay of organising platoon positions and formations then steaming off into enemy territory with guns blazing. When it comes down to a major battle the four-way split-screen can become a bit hard to manage with tanks crossing all four screens at once without you being sure who's on you side and who isn't. Many times in the heat of the battle I managed to off a couple of my own tanks just cause they trundled by when I wasn't expecting them to. Navigation is good though, with various levels of zoom and scroll across the whole map making it very easy to position tanks exactly where you want them and in whatever formation you choose. Even though my comments seem more negative than positive, I enjoyed playing this game and would recommend it to anyone who fancies a bash at something a bit more involving than normal, but be warned that if you already have one of the previous releases you may well feel cheated at buying much the same thing again.

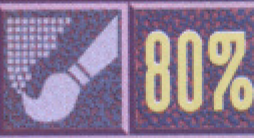


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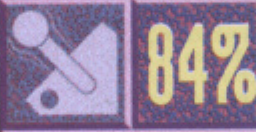
Mouse/Keyboard

MEMORY 512K | DISKS 2

GRAPHICS

80%

SOUND

54%

PLAYABILITY

84%

LASTABILITY

84%

OVERALL 82%



Much improved overall with scrolling faster over the map and general improvement during the main 3D sequences. This version eliminates the 'screen trying to keep up with the cursor' problem.

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DUNE 2
THE BATTLE FOR ARRAKIS



Everybody was shouting about Virgin's addictive strategy game on its original PC release but will it be a talking point for the more discerning Amiga owner? Join Simon Byron for an in-depth chinwag.

What on earth is a 'strategy-based resource management simulation with a heavy real-time combat element' when it's at home? Dune 2, that's what, Virgin's second Westwood 'Beholder and Kyrandia' Studios release. Just what this stupid ad-speak means remains a mystery but rest assured that the game is certainly a damn sight more exciting than it sounds.

If you're expecting a rehashed graphical adventure much in the mould of the original Dune then you couldn't be further from the truth. Westwood have taken a more open-ended approach to the subject of Frank Herbert's series of science fiction novels by designing a flexible and open-ended game which is split into over sixty missions, all safely contained by the main storyline.

The Galactic Emperor has challenged the galaxy's three Family Houses to fight it out for control of the planet Arrakis. Starting off with a simple construction site, you have to develop your buildings and set up an efficient mining operation to harvest the valuable commodity known as Spice. Along the way there will be skirmishes with opposing houses and if you manage to wipe all your assailants from a sector of the territory then that part of the land will become yours until someone else overthrows you. Got that? Good.

Okay, it looks like Sim City, Civilisation and all the other popular strategy games but Dune 2 is actually very different in a number of ways. Firstly, it's very violent, secondly it's easy to play, thirdly... Oh, just read the Verdict, will you?

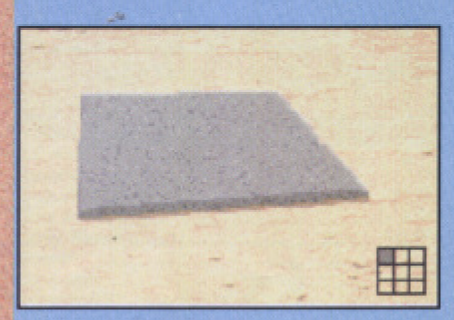
You begin the game with just a construction site and a few quid. The black stuff represents areas which are currently unexplored and as you move your vehicles around it disappears revealing what's underneath. It's best to send forth as many scouts as possible so that the areas richest in Spice can be quickly discovered..

THE STUFF THINGS ARE MADE OF

Building your own mini-empire can be a lot of hassle but our very own indispensable Dune 2 DIY guide should make things a hundred times easier. From now until 6.00 pm Tuesday you'll be able to pick up the equipment shown for reasonable prices and make use of them as described. Remember, every bank holiday weekend, it has to be The One.

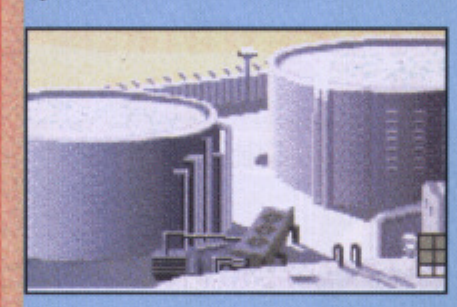
SLAB

One of the most important and cheap items, each square costs a measly five credits. Slabs take a laughable amount of time to generate but, as I've explained, placing them properly is of the utmost importance.



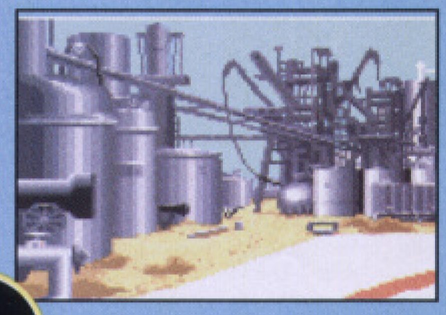
SPICE STORAGE

Obviously you're going to need somewhere to keep all of your hard-mined Spice and where better than in the aptly named Spice Storage? You'll soon find yourself constructing quite a few of these as any mined Spice with nowhere to be stored will go to waste and you'll lose cash fast.



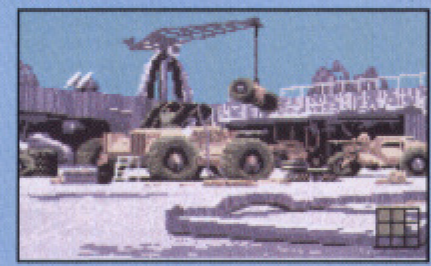
SPICE REFINERY

THE essential piece of kit for anyone hoping to do well, the Spice Refinery is four hundred credits well spent. Once you've got it up and running you'll be endowed with a smart Harvester which will go forth into the land and pick up loads of sexy Spice with which to make oodles of cash.



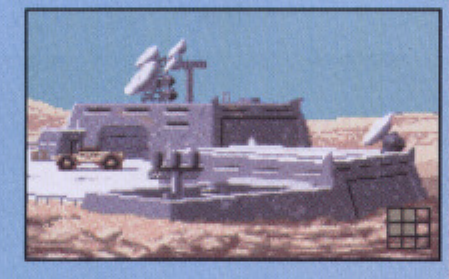
LIGHT VEHICLE FACTORY

Once you've got a few quid rolling in, this should be your next purchase as from here you can generate millions of armoured vehicles. Once you've shelled out four hundred credits you'll be able to upgrade your poofy light attack vehicles into huge lumbering tanks which really take some stick, I can tell you.



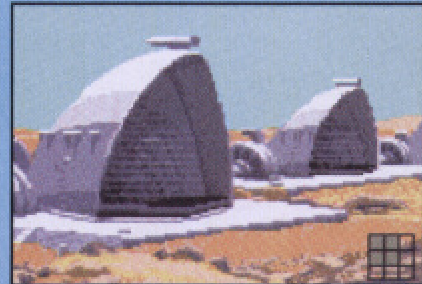
RADAR OUTPOST

Costing four hundred credits, the Radar Outpost acts as a kind of giant pair of infra-red binoculars, enabling you to see far into the distance with far greater accuracy. By changing the usually fairly obscure mini-map into something more detailed you'll be able to plan your mission with confidence.



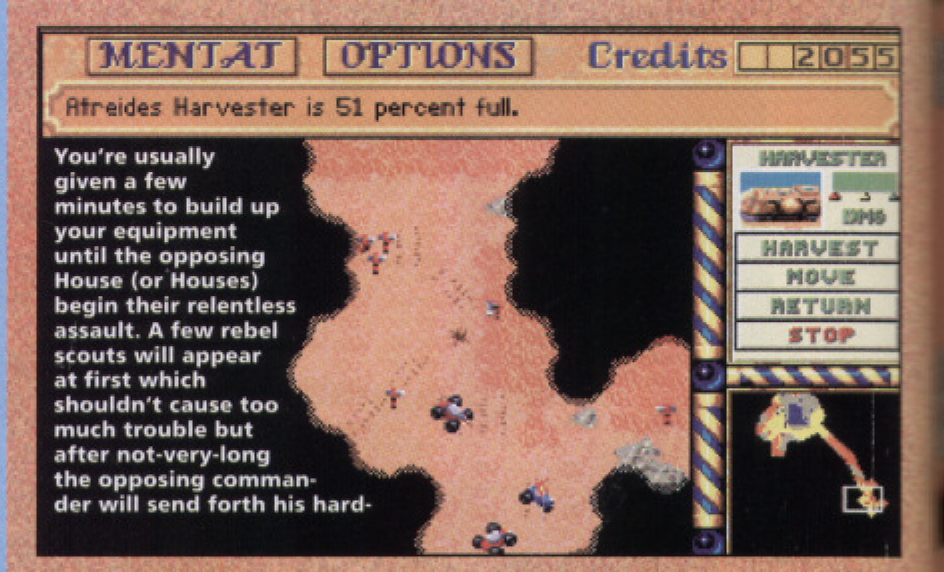
WINDTRAP

Three hundred credits will furnish you with an essential piece of equipment without which you'll be quite literally powerless. By harnessing the barren landscape's continual winds and turning it into electricity, the Windtrap will generate enough power to run a small mining setup.





Having a quick butcher's at the rest of the zone you're in can be done by moving the cursor towards the edge of the inner screen which scrolls the display in that direction. Alternatively, click on the miniature map in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen or move the tiny square over the approximate position you want to view and you'll be immediately transported to that area of the terrain. The choice, as they say, is yours.



You're usually given a few minutes to build up your equipment until the opposing House (or Houses) begin their relentless assault. A few rebel scouts will appear at first which shouldn't cause too much trouble but after not-very-long the opposing commander will send forth his hard-

(Below) Issuing orders to your troops couldn't be simpler. Just click over whichever bloke you wish to move and he'll respond with a sampled "Yes, sir?" The top left-hand corner of the display will then change to show your vehicle, how much damage it as suffered so far and a number of orders such as Move, Retreat, Guard and Attack. Once you've clicked on one of these, select a waypoint or a target by clicking over it and after a sampled "Acknowledged!" he'll be on his way.

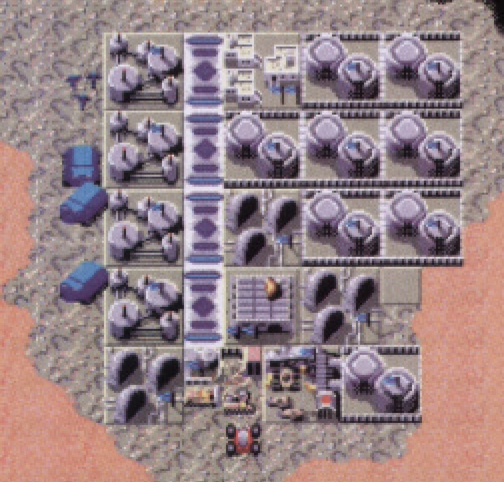




Each house has a Mentat who can be called upon at any stage for a bit of advice. There are simply billions of subjects to discuss, from what functions particular buildings perform to what on earth you're supposed to be doing, and when a topic is selected the Mentor will spin on about all kinds of things. This screen also acts as a convenient pause mode. Brilliant!



As the game progresses, you'll need to think quick and act even faster if you want to keep your attack vehicles in anything resembling working order. Enemy troops often spring from unexplored areas of the landscape and rush towards either your troops or, more frequently, your base. If this occurs then you'll need to destroy them before they can do significant damage to your buildings or, heaven forbid, your Spice refineries - meaning that your potential income is drastically reduced.



(Right) Here's my base looking pretty formidable, wouldn't you say? As soon as you're up to this strength it's best to start churning out as many trikes as possible and send them towards the enemy's fortress.

Atreides unit destroyed

(Above) Messages appear now and again just to let you know what's going on.



You have to be constantly on your guard just in case enemy units try to sneak up on you and damage your base.

These large expanses of Spice-rich sand may look innocent but they're usually the kind of places Sandworms like best...



(Above) Each of the many available buildings needs to be erected on a number of concrete slabs, the amount dependent on the size of the particular section you wish to construct (obviously). Tactically placing each segment plays an important part, with forethought being essential; after all, you don't want to begin laying the foundations of a six by six grid of slabs where there's only room for five, do you? It's also worth remembering that once a slab has been placed it can't be removed and as slabs cost money there's no point wasting any. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves, apparently.

There's plenty of Spice in this area but it's a bit far from your base and prone to attack.

(Below) See all those holes in the ground? That's where the opposing House's buildings used to be before I introduced them to Billy Bomb. Ha!

The map above shows exactly what to expect during a typical mission. Your task here is to completely destroy House Ordos before they do the same to you - a task made harder because of the distance between the two camps. You need to constantly choose between whether to concentrate on defending your base or attempting to blast them to kingdom come, wherever that is. The best thing to do is get enough vehicles together and mount an attack on their Windtraps - that way they'll soon run out of power and be unable to regenerate their forces.

FULL HOUSE, ANYONE?

It's important to know exactly who you're up against and Dune 2 makes this easy because each House has their own method of attack and logic. Check out the guide below and you'll find winning easier.



ATREIDES

The idealists of the planet, House Atreides run their lives by strict honour codes which rarely cause too much problems. If you are fighting against them you'll quickly discover that these ideals may sound good but because the Atreides think they're invincible they'll often underestimate you and leave their base relatively unguarded.

ODOS

House Ordos consists of a bunch of cut-throat vagabonds who are hell-bent intent on sabotaging your base. Unfortunately, they're notoriously crap at planning anything which requires a fraction of intelligence so they'll often have several backup plans in reserve.

HARKONNEN

Ohh, the real nasties. House Harkonnen are evil through and through and think nothing of sending their folk into ludicrous situations which they cannot win as long as it means that their kamikaze will damage your vehicles even slightly. They'll go all out for total devastation.



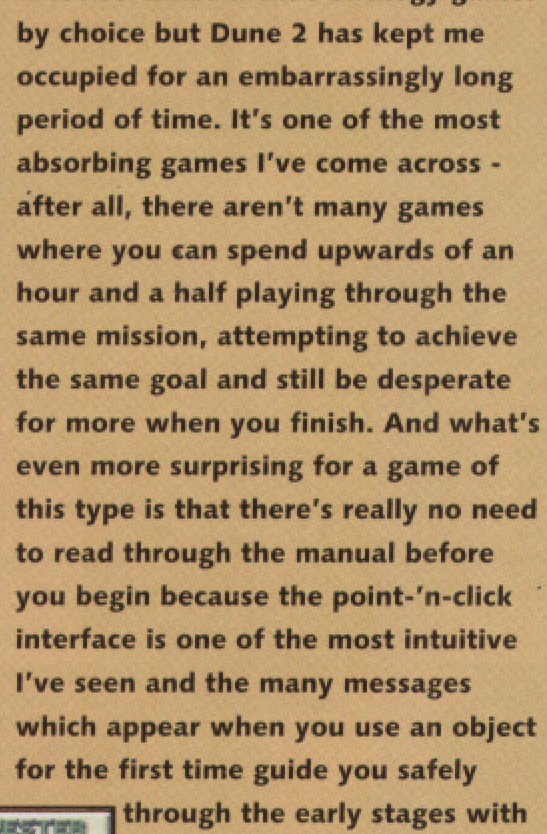
Spice is the variety of life and you'll need tons of the stuff if you are to get enough cash together to build a decent fortress without having to lick the bank manager's rear-end. For a mere four hundred credits you can have this lovely detached Spice refinery, complete with Harvester, with which to mine the valuable commodity so you can sell it for a huge profit. As the mission goes on, discovered mine will quickly disappear so newly discovered reserves soon become invaluable. Get searching!



If you've seen Tremors then you'll be familiar with the Sandworms' logic; send any vibrations through the sand and they'll be immediately notified of your whereabouts. They raise their ugly heads when you're least expecting it and swallow up any of your vehicles which are lying idly on the sand. The best course of action is to try and keep your troops on solid ground - the Sandworms will do their heads in trying to grab you there.

If you've never been to a Harvester before then you'll be wondering what these huge articulated lorry sort of things are doing milling about the place. This is where you get all your cash from; the Harvester, a mining vehicle which picks up discovered Spice and deposits it safely back at the Refinery where it can be quickly turned into money (which is what you want). Take care of these as they're extremely valuable.

THE VERDICT

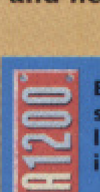


You'll not usually catch me playing these so-called arcade-strategy games by choice but Dune 2 has kept me occupied for an embarrassingly long period of time. It's one of the most absorbing games I've come across - after all, there aren't many games where you can spend upwards of an hour and a half playing through the same mission, attempting to achieve the same goal and still be desperate for more when you finish. And what's even more surprising for a game of this type is that there's really no need to read through the manual before you begin because the point-'n-click interface is one of the most intuitive I've seen and the many messages which appear when you use an object for the first time guide you safely through the early stages with no trouble at all. If you're new to arcade-strategy games then Dune 2 is the one to lose your cherry to as it's easy on beginners and by the time the difficulty level is increased you'll be perfectly proficient with the game mechanics. Although there aren't that many speech-samples, the few which are in the game maintain a tense, military atmosphere while the sweeping chords fading in and out as you battle with the opposing houses create an eerie feeling which suits the game perfectly. I'm desperately racking my brains for something derogatory to say so I can at least moan about something but unfortunately the only thing I can come up with is the lengthy disk accessing before you get into the game proper although I'll not talk about that because it doesn't really affect the gameplay. Nope, I'll just have to be content to swallow my pride and heap unreserved praise onto Dune 2.

Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Westwood Studios
£30.99 Out Now
Mouse

MEMORY	DISKS
1Mb	6

GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	90%
LASTABILITY	92%
OVERALL	90%



A1200: Even better. The screen moves around at a faster pace and some of the additional data which normally needs to be loaded in at certain points is stored in RAM, further speeding up proceedings. Well done Westwood.

DUNE 2 - BATTLE FOR ARRAKIS

IT'S MEAN, IT'S MOODY, IT'S MAGNIFICENT. THE JULY ISSUE OF CU AMIGA IS ON SALE NOW.



ONE STEP BEYOND

When it comes to puzzle games, Ocean are no Pushover, as Simon Byron explains.

Colin Curly's Amiga debut Pushover went down a right storm with journos and punters alike. In it, G.I. Ant had to topple thousands of dominoes spread across one hundred levels to rescue the lovable mutt's Quavers. Of course, it wasn't as simple as it sounds. There were several types of dominoes, each with its own special power, and if the entire lot weren't cleared with one smooth push then the tinier-than-he-sounds insect failed that particular level and had to attempt it all over again.

If you're wondering why I've just spent a paragraph harping on about One Step Beyond's sort-of prequel then it should all become clear in a second, but first let me explain what this game entails.

Colin, as you know, is a sucker for Quavers. In fact, he'll do anything to sample the delicious cheesy snack which melts on your tongue if you leave it there long enough. Through some strange events, Colin is sucked inside his computer and the only way out is to complete one hundred levels of platform fun. As an added incentive, the dopey dog knows that if he successfully escapes the confines of his Amiga there is the biggest pack of Quavers he's ever seen waiting to be devoured.

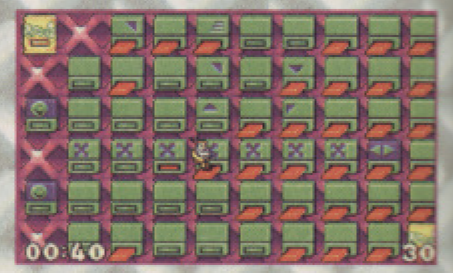
So, four-legs has to clear thousands of platforms spread across one hundred levels in order to escape. Of course, it isn't as simple as it sounds. There are several types of platforms, each with its own special power and if the entire lot aren't cleared before he reaches the exit then the dog has failed that particular level and has to attempt it all over again.

(Above) The first ten-ish levels are fairly straight forward and serve as an excellent tutorial mode, giving you a chance to get to grips with the control system as well as teaching you what all the various platforms do before any real challenge is introduced.

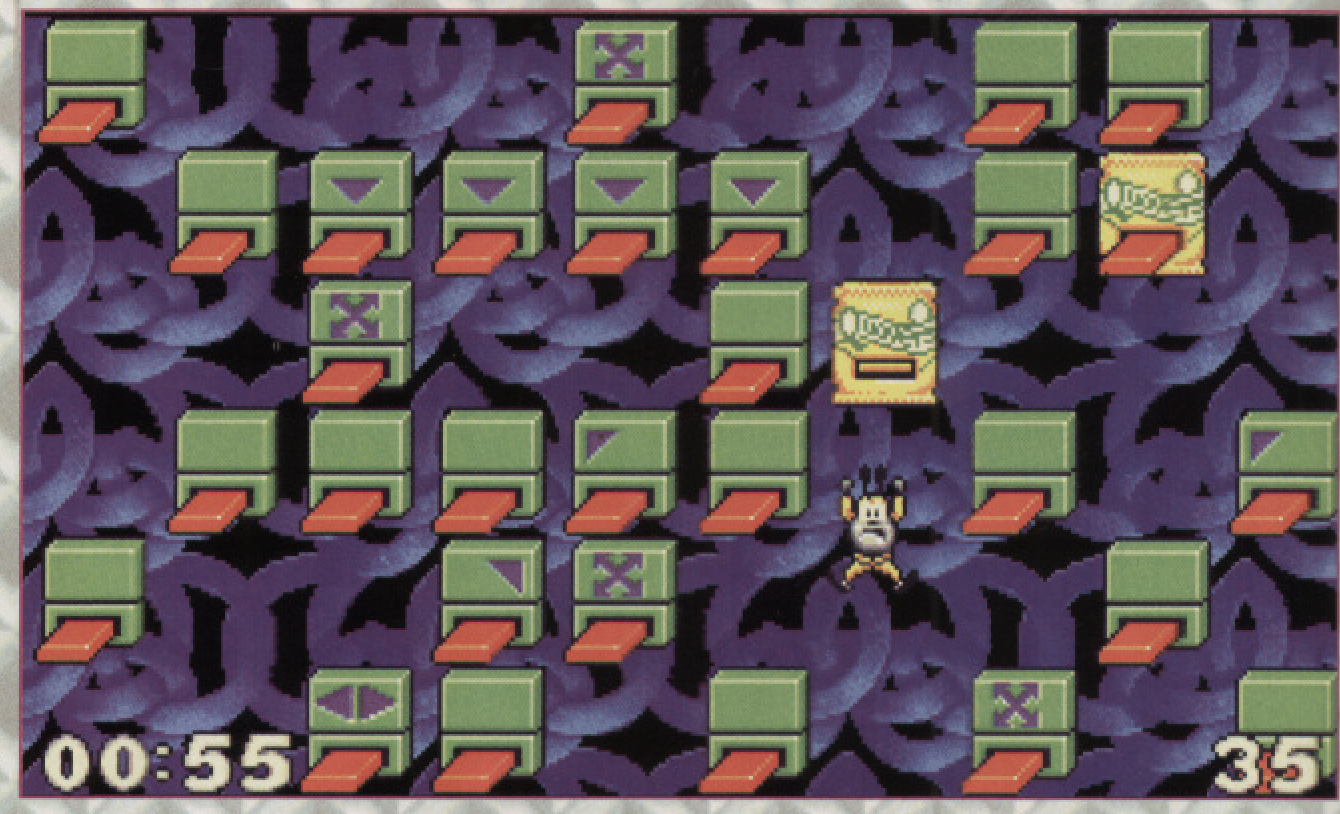
As you've gathered, then, the two games have a lot in common, but they differ in more ways than you'd imagine. But is it enough to make you buy One Step Beyond if you've already played through Pushover? Let's see...

(Below) At the end of a level, Colin is rewarded with a token which can be used whenever you make a wrong move to reset the last platform, giving you an extra chance to get things right. If you run out of tokens when attempting a particular screen then there's no alternative other than having all the blighters reset, like here.

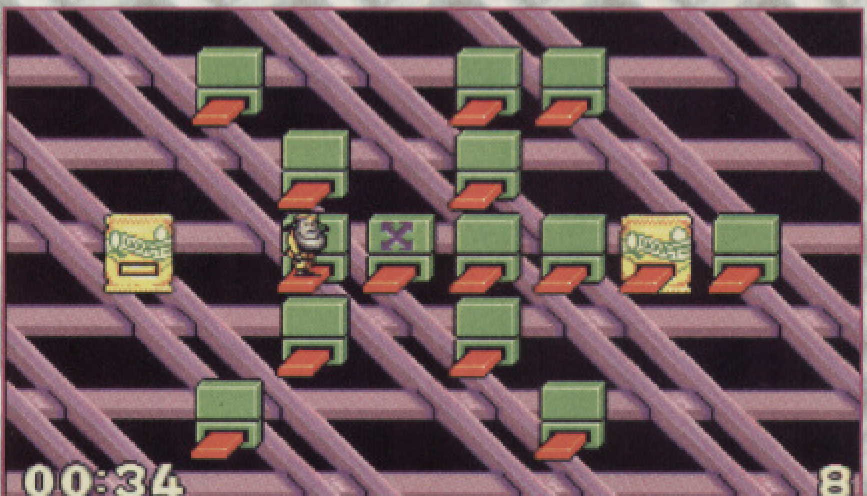




(Above) Colin can leap one or two squares to either side, one or two squares in any diagonal direction and straight down. The more observant will have noticed he's not able to jump straight up, for some reason. Each move is accessed by moving the joystick in the direction you want to go for just a single jump and moving with the firebutton pressed for a double leap, which is slightly fiddly at first.



(Above) Like any dog, Colin is quite fragile and can only take so much punishment. If he falls more than two levels or drops off the screen then he'll immediately turn into an angelic hound but because there aren't any lives as such (each level can be attempted as many times as you like), this isn't too much of a problem.



(Left) Some levels require a lot less leaping that you might first expect. Take this one, for instance. Only about a third of the platforms need to be visited because there's a whole line of Ray Shutters just waiting to be used. Just jump two squares to the right, initiate a super-diagonal leap, make use of the Ray Shutter and clear the rest of the platforms. Easy!

Once Colin starts leaping about you'll notice that each platform will slide shut after he steps off it so you need to carefully plan a route before you begin your trek to the exit. You can switch them off in any order you like just as long as every platform is shut before you land on the exit square, otherwise you'll need to start all over again.

00:27 37

THOSE PLATFORMS IN FULL

Throughout One Step Beyond's hundred levels you'll come across some pretty weird platforms which, when activated, usually dramatically alter the state of play. Some directly affect Colin, others re-open previously visited platforms and here, for your delight, is exactly what's what.



SAFE

Not everything in life is complicated. Take this Safe platform. It will remain open all the time, making it an ideal place to return to time and again.



BOUNCE DOWN

As soon as Colin steps onto the Bounce Down it will throw him down a level (make sure there's a platform there or you'll die) and close up for the day.



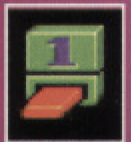
IN & OUT

Yeah, shake it all about. This platform will continually move in and out, meaning that you have to time your jumps to it with great accuracy.



DELAY

This platform will remain open for approximately fifteen seconds after Colin moves off it so you can retrace your steps for a limited amount of time.



NUMBERS

You'll need to close these tiles in numerical order for the exit to function correctly. You can step on any un-numbered platforms in between but mess up the sequence and you'll be in trouble.



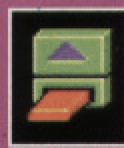
HORIZONTAL OPENER

As if you hadn't guessed, this is the opposite to the Horizontal Shutter and opens all the platforms in the same row as soon as Colin lands on it.



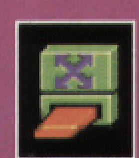
HORIZONTAL SHUTTER

This closes all the platforms in the same row the instant Colin jumps off it.



BOUNCE UP

Make sure there's a platform above when you step on the Bounce Up because it will somersault you up two levels and shut itself. If there's nothing above you then you'll fall to your doom.



RAY SHUTTER

The Ray Shutter affects every platform along its diagonal path (indicated by the arrows) and will shut every platform along those lines as soon as Colin steps off it.

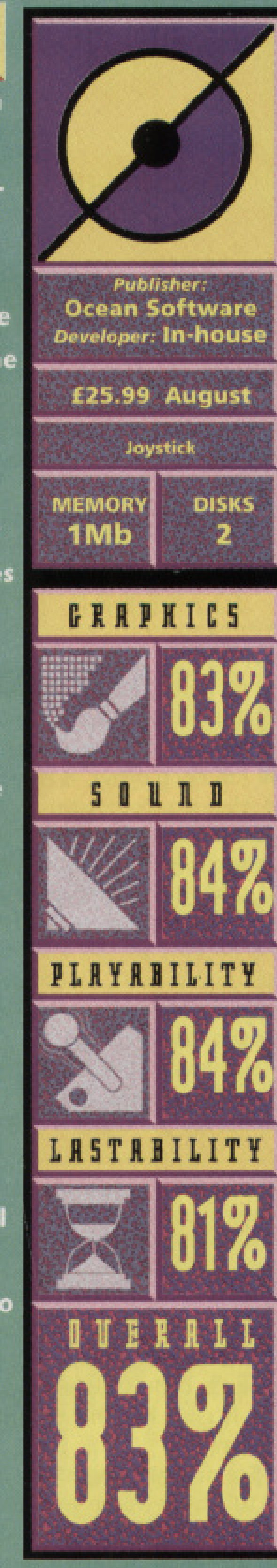


BOUNCE DIAGONALLY

There are two versions of this platform, for chucking you both left and right. Once you step on one of these you'll be thrown diagonally in the direction indicated by the little arrow.

THE VERDICT

Ocean have once again come up with a puzzling classic. The beauty of One Step Beyond is that, unlike most puzzle games, it's actually strangely relaxing, with the player hardly ever forced to up his pace to an impossible level. This is partly due to the way the game is designed - lightening reactions wouldn't be advantageous here because Colin only moves at a certain speed so as long as you know where you're going a couple of moves in advance then you're pretty much sorted. What's also nice about the game is that although the difficulty level is perfectly judged, you can still find yourself completing a few of the harder levels in a couple of goes so you always feel you're getting somewhere. But don't think for a minute that this game is a pushover because some of the levels are incredibly tough and also because G.I. Ant doesn't make an appearance. (Sorry.) The only thing that could possibly spoil the game for you would be if you had a joystick with a lot of travel in it. No, not one that's seen the world but one with which it is hard to accurately push diagonally. You see, controlling Colin is a fiddly business and it can be extremely annoying when you're trying to leap up and right only to find that the obedient dog jumps to his doom because you were a fraction out with the joystick. Still, I can't see how this could have been implemented any other way other than including a keyboard option and I'm sure that most gamers would persevere with the stick even then. I suppose we'll have to file it under Just One Of Those Things and say no more. At the end of the day, One Step Beyond is an enjoyable puzzler which is thoroughly recommended to anyone.





As 2 Unlimited sang: "No no, no no no no, no no no no, no no there's no difference."

B·A·T·2

Ever wanted to become an intergalactic agent with hi-tech weapons, videophones and biological implants?. Matt Broughton books the first available interplanetary vessel to the mysterious planet of Shedishan saying "I'll be back."

It's the 22nd century and the Earth, whose populace have joined hands and stopped fighting each other, is now a member of the Confederation of Galaxies (COG). A massive space colonisation plan to explore the furthest uncharted regions of the universe is currently underway and, to coordinate the actions of the Confederation's different worlds, an organisation has been created: The Union of Worlds for the Regrouping.

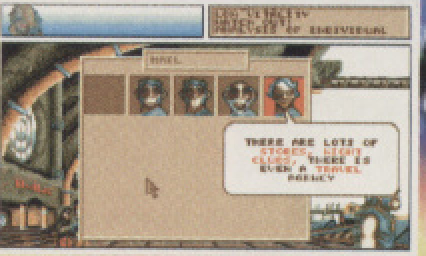
However, there's often intense squabbling between the Confederation's member worlds and the UWR's plans are frequently stymied by the vetoes of certain unruly planetary governments. This is where the Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters (or BAT) comes in. It's an ultra-secret service employed by the Confederation to surreptitiously bring sniffy alien governments back in line. This may sound a little sinister and, well, it is but it's all for the common good, honest.

So, pretty heavy stuff, huh? What all this boils down to is that you - as a BAT agent (BATman?) - must travel to Roma II, a city on the planet Shedishan, to help agent Sylvia Hadford stop the giant Koshan Corporation which has a vice-like stranglehold on the galactic economy.

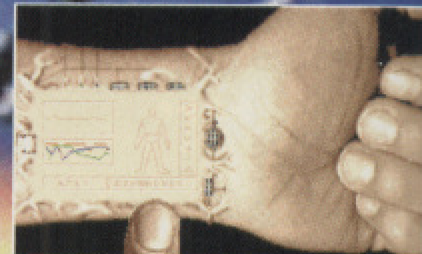
In essence BAT 2 is a graphic adventure interspersed with 3D arcade sequences. In the adventure section of the game you can freely explore the city of Roma II and interact with anyone you should meet. However, since the city is so huge, to get across town you'll need to take advantage of the transportation systems available, which is where the 3D comes in. The transports vary from taxis and maintenance vehicles to the Via-Express - an overhead high-speed road system.

Just to add to the fun you have a Bidirectional Organic Bioputer (with the cutesy acronym BOB) implanted in you left wrist, which can be used to monitor your bodily functions or programmed to augment your physical and mental skills.

The game's atmosphere is a heady mix between that of Blade Runner and KGB, so come with me now as we take a look...



When you're talking with the characters that you meet, their replies contain black and red words. By clicking on the red 'key' words, you can direct the conversation towards that specific topic. Once you have done this, those chosen key words become available to you from your vocabulary menu. This makes it easy to ask different people - with different knowledge - about the same thing.

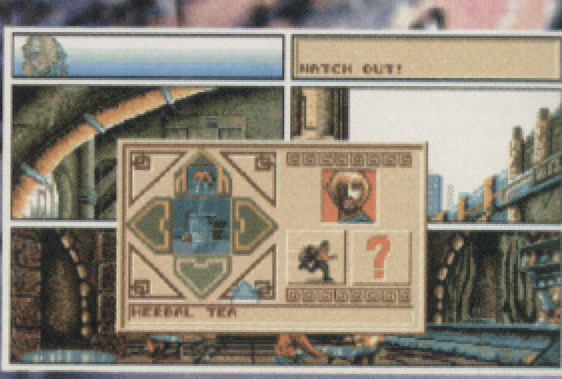

This is BOB, your Bidirectional Organic Bioputer. You'll find it implanted in you left wrist at all times. In it's simplest form, BOB acts as self advisory doctor, monitoring all of your functions including calorific and H2O requirements. It also acts as a clock and can be set up for an alarm. Very useful when you have an important rendezvous to make miles away.



When entering into strategic combat, this screen appears showing you and your opponents' overall strengths as a series of bar graphs. The computer runs through a numbers of 'turns', the outcome of which takes into consideration factors such as weapons in use and any armour worn. You can access your inventory to change weapons or can flee at any point.

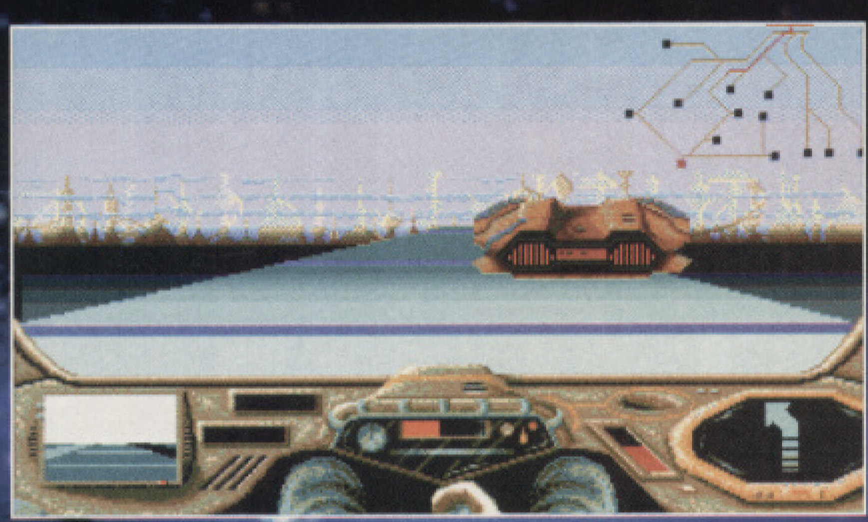


The general screen display can be anything from a full screen to a four-way split, showing the last four locations visited. The 'dynamic' icon changes depending on what is available at that position on the screen. Here you can see one of the many entrances to the Via-Express, while BOB warns me that that strange looking bloke isn't in a very good mood. Best not mug him then.



All object manipulation is done through this inventory-style screen. You can arrange your own pockets, offer goods to be sold, buy from other characters or even steal things while their attention is elsewhere - which is what I'm up to here. The way you organise your inventory is quite important as it affects how quickly you can get to weapons and ammunition during a fight.

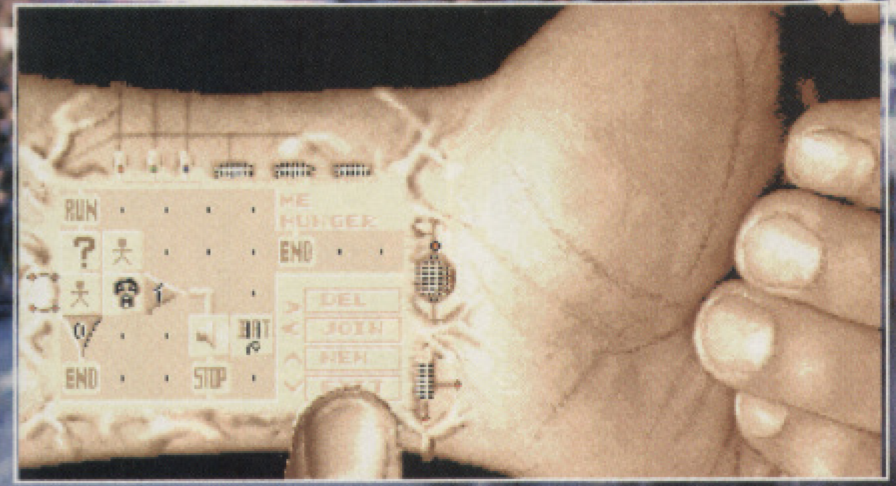




Here on the Via-Express your arcade skills are brought out for a dusting. The map layout in the top right shows you the stations available, while the bottom right shows you the next junction. Other 'cars' have to be avoided and you must keep on the track otherwise you will be charged for damage. A rear-view mirror lets you know of any passing traffic and also helps avoid being pulled over by the Via Police should you get caught speeding.



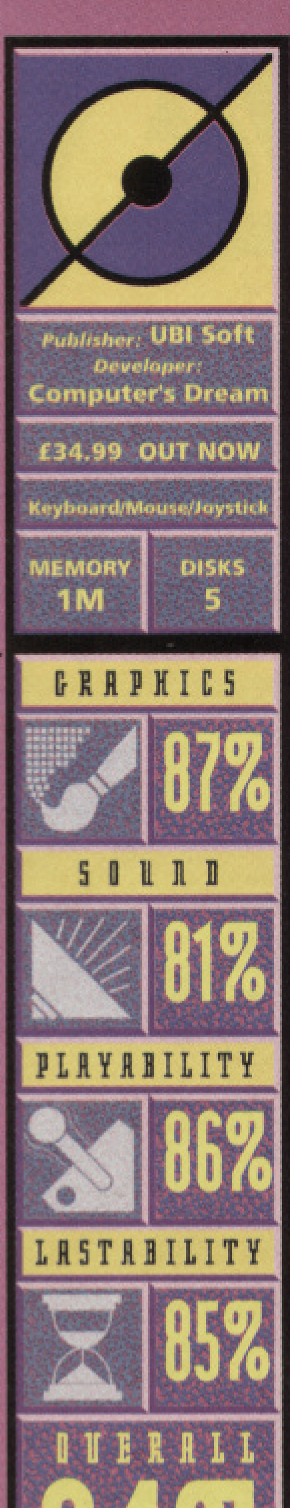
The first thing you must do is choose what sort of agent you want to be. There are a number of preset agents to pick from, all of which have different skills and attributes. From here you move on to the training school where you have eight week's allowance to train your agent further in weapons, survival, self control, sensory, intellectual, psychological and physical abilities.

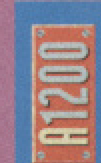


In conjunction with the general functions of BOB, you have at your disposal an editor that allows you to write programs. By doing this - which incidentally you don't have to do to succeed - you can automate many activities in your agent's life. The programming language - 'Parallel Token' - is totally icon driven and works much like BASIC. Here I have just completed a program that will analyse characters around me and warn me if any have high aggression levels.

THE VERDICT

Very nice indeed. I've got a lot of time for games with a decent storyline and a nice bit of atmosphere, and this has both. The main control system is easy to use and the city is nicely mapped out so that you don't have to plod back through tons of locations to return to a specific location. People are milling around all the time giving excellent opportunities to chat or even steal. I particularly enjoyed stealing things from innocent thick plebiens - the poor citizens of Roma II - and then selling it back to them at a bargain price, but that's the kinda guy I am. The conversations improve as you gain more knowledge and it's quite easy to lead a discussion towards a specific subject so you always feel like you're actually getting somewhere and not hitting endless brick walls. The hi-tech toys soon pop up, such as videophones, weapons, recording systems and defence mechanisms, and learning how to use them is fun. The sim sections are done well with the difficulty set just right, so that while they're not quite hard enough to get in the way of the adventure they're not so easy that playing them becomes a chore. It's also nice to see that the data has been sensibly arranged on the disks so that there's very little swapping. If you like these sort of adventure/arcade games, this could be well worth a la-la-la-la-la look-in.





Runs perfectly well on the A1200 with no real differences. The 3D sections are slightly speeded up but overall there are no major changes.



A320 AIRBUS



Yes, you too can wear a glistening uniform, pose around airports and pick up crazy tourist chicks. Captain Matt Broughton would like to welcome you aboard today's flight on the A320 Airbus and would remind you not to think about that film where they crash and end up eating each other. Thank you.

Apparently - and I quote - "there is hardly a more responsible, complex job than that of the commercial airline pilot At one time or another, all of us have thought about what it would be like to be a pilot." Well I bloody well haven't though I've thought about what it would be like to be abducted by the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders. Close, but no banana. This is not a game, this is a very serious journey into the world of physics and aviation.

The breakthrough involving powered flight was achieved by the Wright Brothers, who were not only the first to fly, but also the first to research the fundamental theoretical and scientific rules involved. I wonder if they had an 80-page manual in mind at the time. Probably not.

An 80-page manual is what Thalion had in mind though and that's exactly what you get, along with some very scary looking High Altitude Enroute Charts, a reference manual and two thick books containing all the ILS Approach Charts (sorry?) for the North-East and West coasts of America. The only part of the package I was able to cope with was the nice and simple poster of a Lufthansa Airbus flying majestically past the Empire State Building.

This little treat of a game was designed by Rainer Bopf, a high ranking Luftwaffe officer, and really isn't for the technically disadvantaged. The 'game' has no set objectives and there are no real missions as such - the phrase 'take off, fly, land' could be used here quite accurately. I won't even attempt to go into any detail - mainly because I haven't got a clue - so here are some Airbus-related abbreviations to amuse you while you wait for the verdict to arrive. ILS, NAV, SEL, DF, ADF, NDB, EFCS and all major credit cards.



(Left) This is the smarmy git that pops up every now and then to tell you how crap you were or how crap you're likely to be. It's on this screen that you choose the options to train or go on duty for real. Off to oblivion. Messing with the big boys. Taking no prisoners. That sort of thing.

(Left) Ah, the rolling green fields of mid-west America - I think. I got lost and didn't have a clue where I was!

(Below) Once you move onto duty as opposed to training weather conditions come into play and can be crucial when it comes to fuel and timing calculations. This rather sad Michael Fish-type gives you the chance to define how the weather will be or take your chances with a random setting. Livin' on the edge - livin' on the limits.

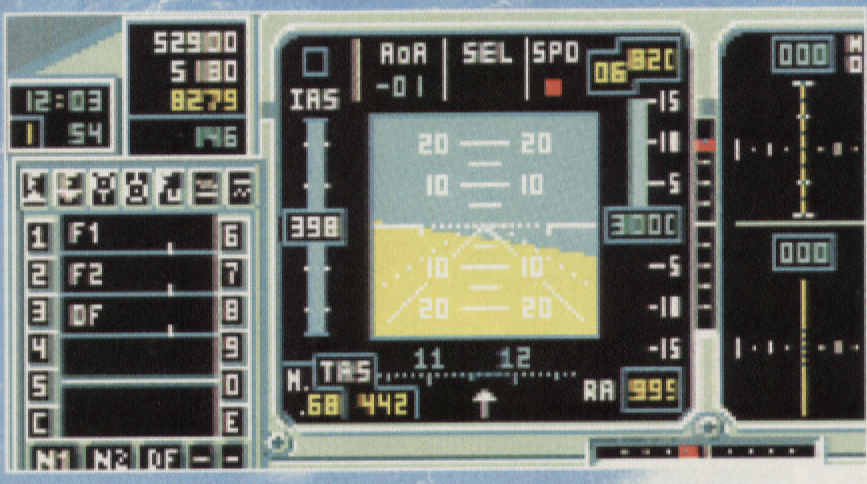
Flight Plan

VFR	IFR	ok
FROM	KLAX	
TO	EDDK	
ETD	1200	
PAX	55	POB
FREIGHT	25	x100Kg
FUEL	30	x100Kg

(Left) Whether you're in training or on duty, you will need to have a flight plan. Here you will choose where your flight will begin and where it will end. Here you also organise the number of passengers on the flight, the extra freight you'll carry and the amount of fuel necessary to complete the flight. All this information can be collected from the hefty instructions and charts supplied.







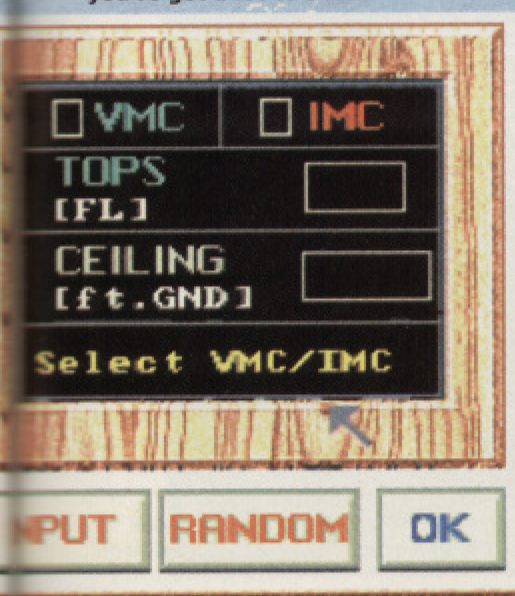
To have any chance of success you must understand this panel. All navigation settings and times are shown here along with fuel consumption and preselected headings. Good use of the altimeter, radar, artificial horizon and gyro compass are essential if you're even thinking about landing.

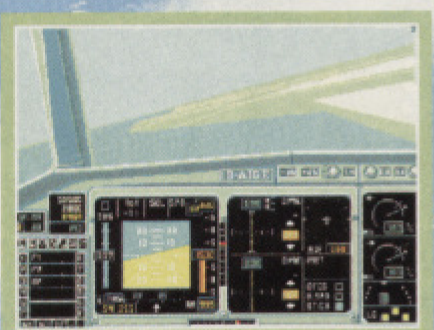
(Below) See what I mean. Smug git. I'd like to slam his trousers in the emergency door and fly off with him to 30,000 feet and then open it. That would wipe the smile of his face. Well actually it would wipe most of his features off him (and limbs).



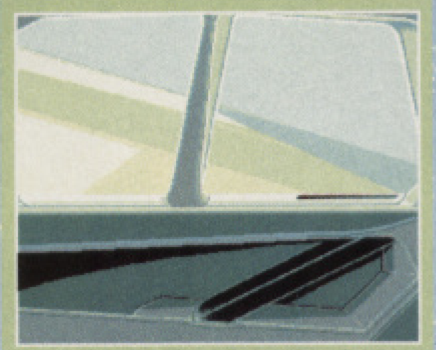
Total Missions	:	0
Total Flight Time	:	0:00
Crashes	:	0
----- In Present Rank -----		
Missions	:	0
Flight Time	:	0:00
Performance (pc)	:	0%
Stand-Check required	:	yes / no X

After a flight you're presented with this, giving you a brief run-down of your performance - but it's not as if you've got a lot to check.

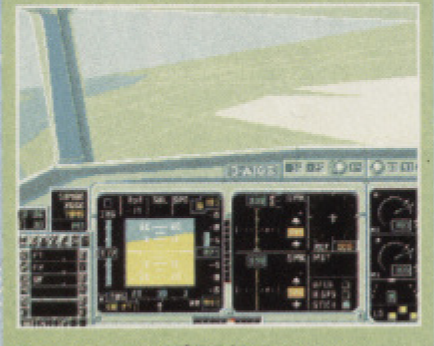




This is the sort of screen that you'll spend most of your time looking at. You'll probably be looking at the instrument panel more than the view - as inspiring as it may be - as it's hard to get any real feel for height or distance without following the read-outs and direction headings. Once you come to land, the view does become important as you need to take off autopilot and line 'her' up nice and straight. Just before plunging head first into the runway and then eating the passengers. Probably.



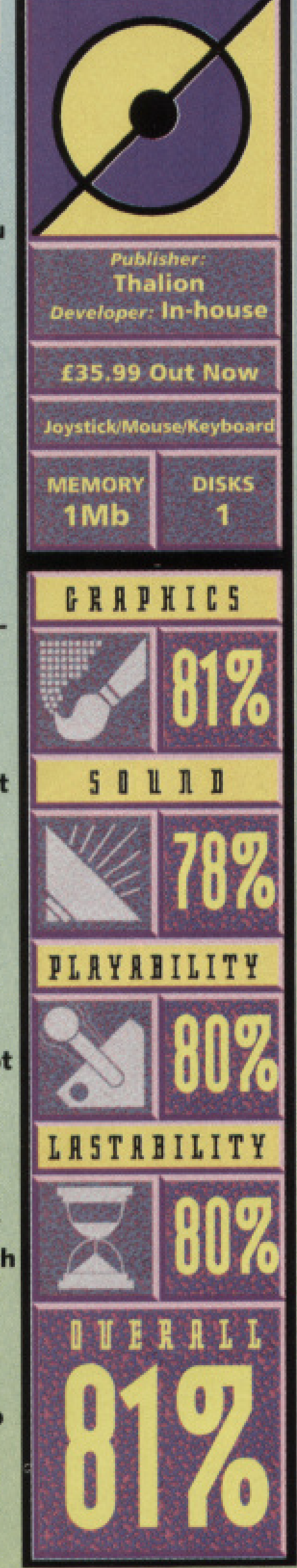
If you want you can pan around the cockpit and have a look out of the side windows but there's not a lot of point - the view's the same.

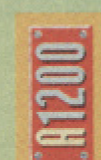


Don't expect MiG-29's to come screeching out of the blue towards you at MACH 3 cause it's not gonna happen. Sit back and enjoy a nice cup of tea while Ronnie - the autopilot - does most of the long-term flying. Your job here is to make sure headings are followed and that the aircraft approaches the next runway from the correct direction to make a successful landing.

THE VERDICT

I'm sure you all know what to expect from this Verdict, so I won't disappoint you. Here we go... If you like flight simulations of a technically accurate nature, you'll like this. If you don't - you won't. This isn't the sort of package for someone delving into flight sims for the first time. This is a detailed sim that should only be approached with prior experience. Graphically Airbus holds no real surprises with the normal flat 3-D landscape stretching as far as the eye can see and the familiar cockpit crammed full of dials, lights and numbers. There are a few static shots which pop up before and after the actual flight, but other than that the game barely needs graphics at all as it becomes a bit of a 'follow the instruments' venture. I managed to get airborne quite quickly - well, in half an hour - thanks to the manual's Flying Lesson designed for, and I quote, "you power users who don't really read the manuals" but found not a lot to do. The auto pilot kicks in after a while, leaving you to watch the sky and ground undulating slightly until another runway crawls over the horizon begging to be crashed into at high velocity - fifty-five passengers don't half make a mess I can tell you. Actually that's a lie as there doesn't even seem to be any dramatic way to die which was, as you might expect, the first thing I tried to do. You can't help but admire the time and effort that must have been spent putting this package together and I've no doubt that this is a very accurate simulation but, at the end of the day, when all's said and done, when the chips are down and the fat lady sings (please God, let this Verdict end) I can't see this appealing to a vast number of gamers other than those already well versed in such things. For it's type it scores well but be sure that it's what you want to spend hours and hours on before buying.





The flight sequence seems to move a bit faster and the overall scrolling is smoother but other than that there don't appear to be any changes


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Helicopter games have a certain appeal with good ones often proving to be far more enjoyable than mindless modern-day flight sims. This is mainly because of the subject matter itself; you can exercise a greater degree of control over a chopper and the relatively low ceiling of the things ensure that there's plenty of nail-biting excitement to be had as you swing your way around the gameworld, hugging the ground and avoiding relentless enemy fire.

If we'd thought of the Where Are You..? feature a couple of months ago then Gunship 2000's inclusion whould have been a certainty. Originally planned for a November release, MicroProse's helicopter simulation has constantly slipped and slipped until now, finally, the finished version has arrived.

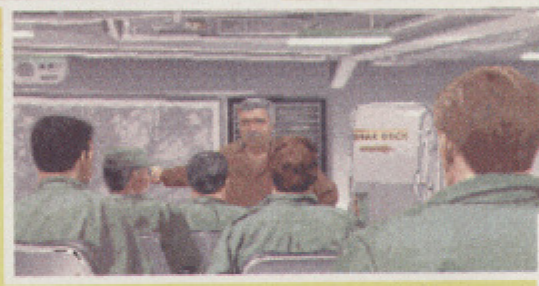
So just what has caused this prolonged delay? Well, for a start, the original programmer, Kevin Buckner, 'left' the project at the end of last year, roughly about the same time as one of the bigwigs at MicroProse rejected the game as not being good enough, although we're assured the two events are entirely unconnected. Gunners 2000ers was sentenced to another few months in the deep and dark holding cell known simply as 'Development'.

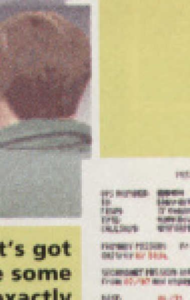
Gunship 2000 is a slightly more detailed 'copter simulation than we've become used to. Not only does the game allow you to pilot one of eight super-tough helicopters but also to command a squadron of four others if you wish, issuing orders and basically planning their mission as well as your own. Your overall objective is to rise up through the Army ranks, from Warrant Officer Candidate to Brigadier General, but you can't achieve this by sitting on your butt and having your hair cropped. Oh no, you've got to get in there and do battle against overwhelming odds, blast everything to Kingdom Come and generally do all the kinds of things that grown-up men love. Sounds like fun...

GUNSHIP 2000

Don't you just hate it when you wait ages and ages for a game only to find out that it's better than you could ever have imagined? Simon Byron does.





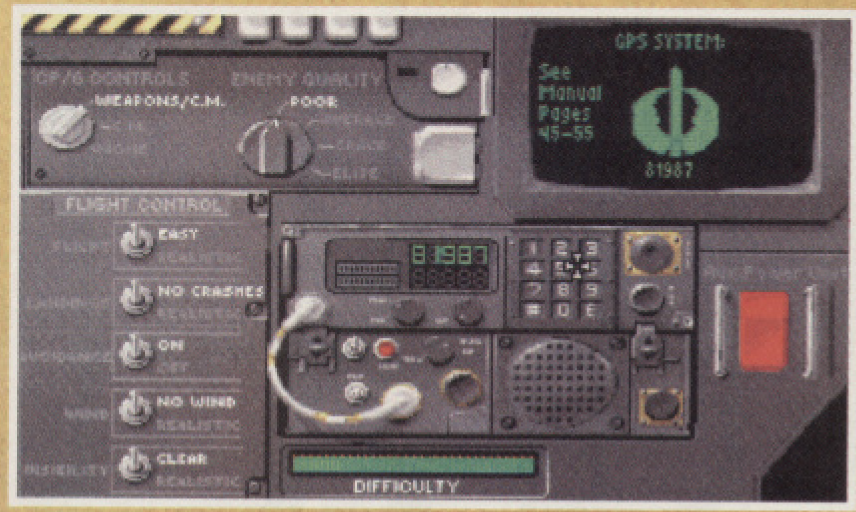


(Above) Right you 'orrible lot, get a grip of yourselves. Not like that, Jenkins, but by selecting where you want to go whenever the cursor changes to a kind of bullseye thing. From here you can select loads of options from training to full-blown mission, enter your name and so on.

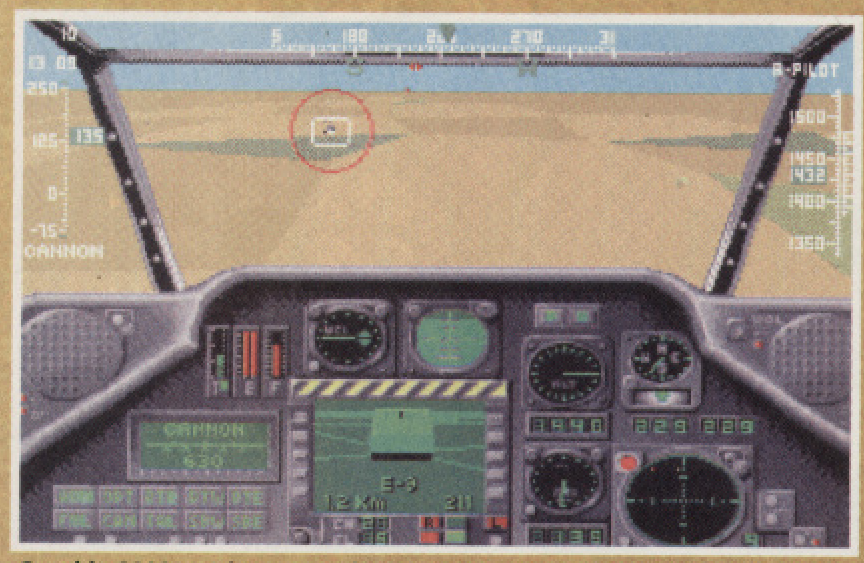


You know how pants are sometimes called briefs? No? Well that's got nothing to do with the briefing area of the game - the place where some jumped up bloke has written down your mission objectives and exactly what you've got to blow up. What's excellent about the game is that most missions contain several randomly-generated elements which means that you'll very rarely come across the same two missions twice.





Even the difficulty levels are represented in an authentic way! Welcome to the cockpit, where every flick of a switch represents some aspect of the game so you can pretty much tailor the game to your own needs. When you first load up, everything is set to ensure that your maiden flight is as easy as carting a rugby team over the Andes but if you want to make the game more difficult then adjust the enemy quality, the helicopter realism, whether or not you can crash-land, that sort of thing.



Gunship 2000's radar system is comprehensive to say the least. As well as tiny dots appearing all over the place to represent any hostile installations, there's also several threat lights which inform you whenever the enemy is tracking you. If this is the case then it's best to switch on either your radar jammer or IR jammer (or both if things are getting really desperate) and alter course.



HELICOPTER DEATH MACHINES FROM HELL

The eight helicopters on offer are some of the most formidable killing machines in the world today. Some are available at any time whilst others can only be flown when you reach a certain rank (they're far too sexy for your average Warrant Officer Candidate). Let's take a look at the five you can fly straight away, shall we?

AH-64A APACHE GUNSHIP



Sex with a rotor is just one way of describing the AH-64A. It entered service back in 1986, so it's getting on a bit now, but it's by no means past its sell-by date, mainly due to the sophisticated navigational flight aids and stuff like that. Surprisingly, it has one of the fastest rates of climb - an impressive 42ft/second.

AH-1W SUPERCOBRA GUNSHIP



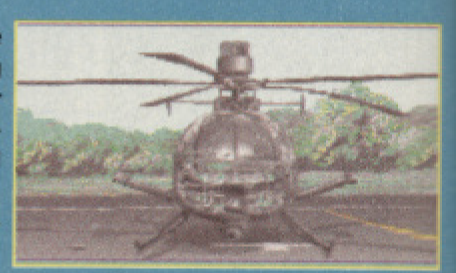
Apart from sounding like a SNES shoot-'em-up, the SuperCobra, as it's known, has a nose- mounted night targetting sysyem (NTS) which includes all kinds of abbreviated toughness such as the FLIR and TOW fire controls. If you want to climb and descend as quick as possible then its 45ft/sec should serve you well.

OH-58D KIOWA WARRIOR SCOUT HELICOPTER



The Kiowa Warrior has the longest name and shortest length. With no main gun (only missiles can help you here), you'll have to make sure that you're either completely excellent at avoiding enemy fire or you've got a few wingmen armed to the very back of their teeth to protect you.

AH-6G DEFENDER LIGHT GUNSHIP/SCOUT HELICOPTER

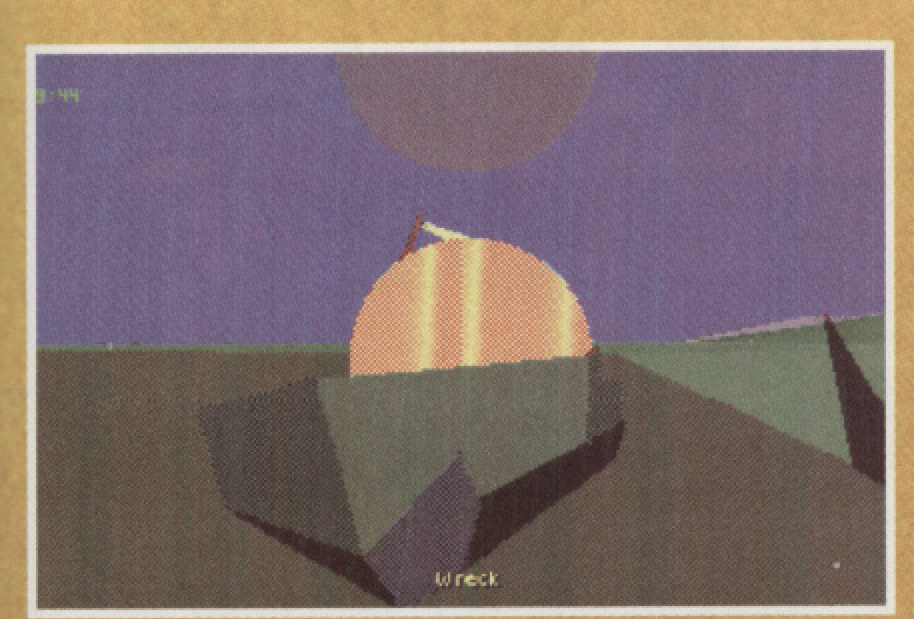


With a superb field of view, the Defender is ideal for for scouting around and also handy for day or night point attacks and anti-armour missions. It contains a full suite of communication systems, navigational flight aids and survivability systems.

UH-60 K/L BLACKHAWK ASSAULT HELICOPTER



The Blackhawk has been in service since 1979. Its primary use is to transport troops but it can also be used for medevac (your guess is as good as mine for that one) and for dropping off supplies. This is another helicopter without a gun so, again, it needs other choppers for backup.

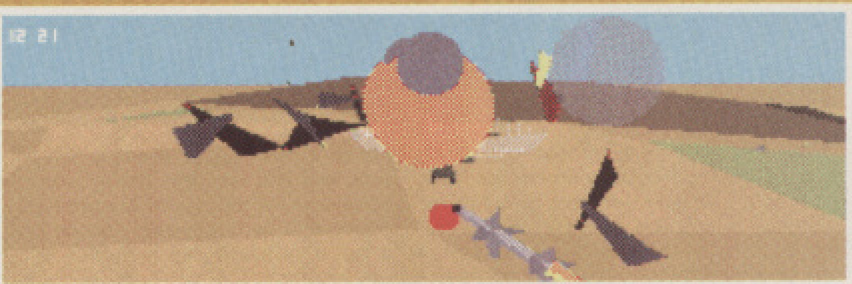


We love explosions which is why we're getting engaged to Gunship 2000. Once you've sent a missile on its merry way, you can either view the action from behind the explosive or pan around to see the action from behind target and marvel in all its glory when it shatters into one hundred thousand billion squillion tiny pieces (approx). Ha!

(Below) Where would we be without external views in modern-day simulations? Captionless, that's where, so it's a good job that Gunship 2000 has a wealth of them. You've got your left and right views, the chase and flight chase view; tactical, remote and reverse tactical view, as usual, but also included is the mast view which can only be used with specific helicopters. This acts as a kind of periscope thingy so that you can peer over obstacles while keeping the body of the chopper firmly out of sight.

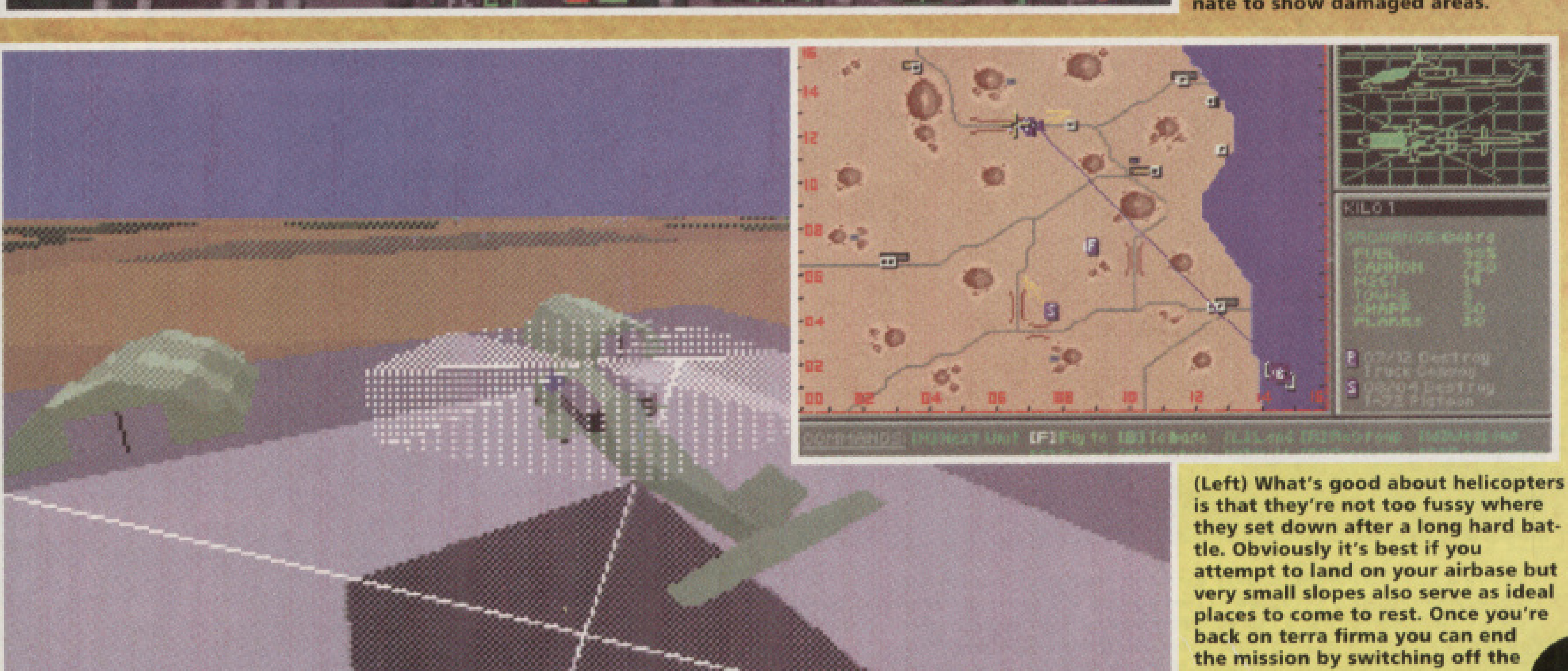


Your wingmen are intelligent so you'll often discover them firing at enemy targets without you. They'll usually remain in close formation but if you instruct them to head off elsewhere (towards the secondary target, for instance) they'll shoot off and obey your orders to the letter.



(Left) The difference between helicopters and planes is self-evident by the way you control them in simulations. Moving the joystick forward points the nose down and therefore sends you in a forwardly direction, pulling back slows you down, left and right move you, well, left and right whilst adjusting the speed of the rotors controls your velocity. The thing to remember is that pointing the nose down won't decrease your altitude.

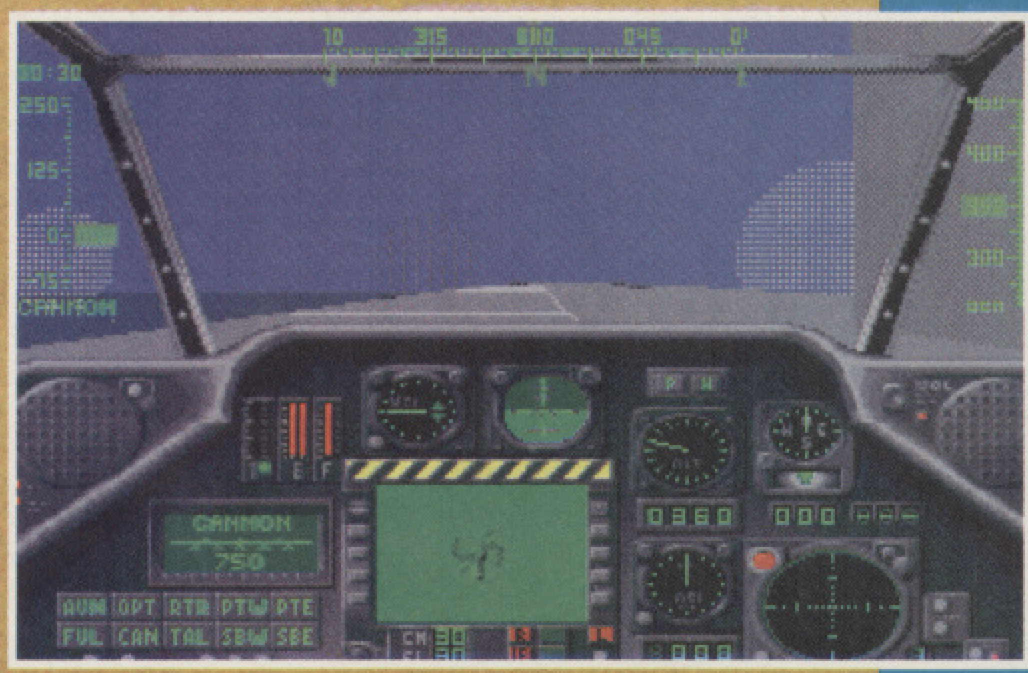
(Below) Calling up the map pauses the action so you can take your time over this particular section of the game. From here you can issue orders to your wingmen (if you've got any, that is), set waypoints which will guide you to your primary and secondary targets or just have a quick gander at the surroundings. Also shown is the refuelling point, a location which is a necessity if you're taking your time over a misson and run low on juice. The line drawings of the helicopter itself may look all fine and dandy at the moment but as you take more direct hits it will illuminate to show damaged areas.



(Left) What's good about helicopters is that they're not too fussy where they set down after a long hard battle. Obviously it's best if you attempt to land on your airbase but very small slopes also serve as ideal places to come to rest. Once you're back on terra firma you can end the mission by switching off the rotors.



The HUD is one of the most essential parts of a pilot's equipment. Not only does it sound like someone being sick, but it's also the thing from which all information can be obtained. Whenever a potential target is sighted, you'll see a pictorial representation of it in the green screen in the middle of the display, but also you'll be informed as to whether or not you've locked onto it or if it's in range or not.



Once you've accepted a mission, set all the difficulty levels and so on, you'll find yourself behind the steering wheel of a lumbering great helicopter. What's initially impressive is how easy it is to get airborne - even Mike Smith would have no trouble in piloting these beasts (okay, so maybe that was a little far fetched). Just engage the rotors and press the '+' key - it really is as simple as that. You're now ready to head off into the moonlight.



If you're a bit of a namby-pamby then the Training School is the place for you. Any missions accepted in this area of the game are undertaken at the training centre, a marvellous place which can accurately simulate any aspects of an actual Theatres Of Duty. The enemy are always positioned in the same place so that you can practice using different weapons and tactics with ease.

THE VERDICT

I never thought I'd see the day when a game would combine the depth of a full-blow 'serious' simulation with the sheer fun of an arcadey 3D shoot-'em-up. Thunderhawk was a laugh, that's for sure, but in terms of realism it was strictly limited, so for simulation purists its appeal was seriously lacking. Hearty congratulations, then, to MicroProse for creating a game which everyone can enjoy (and an even bigger pat on the back for not rush-releasing the game at the end of last year). Banish all recollections of the demo version to the very back of your brain - the scenery shifts along at a far faster rate and the feeling of sweeping over the mountains and hugging the ground is simply breathtaking. The inclusion of the wingmen is a brilliant idea; not only are they invaluable in some missions but it also creates a strong enthusiasm to do well and there's a genuine sense of loss whenever an allied 'copter sustains too much damage and hits the deck. It's the Amiga equivalent of Dying Young, I can tell you. On top of all this, the action sequences are well designed with most primary and secondary targets usually positioned close to mountain ranges so you can sneak around the back and pick off their weaponry with cat-like stealth, which is always satisfying. The undulating terrain is a bit of a first and will surely serve as a benchmark for future sims. No more should we have to put up with flat and sparse landscapes - if anyone tries to sneak a limp, lifeless and downright lazy plane or helicopter game past you then show them a simulation which excels in every way. Show them Gunship 2000.



Publisher: Microprose
Developer: In-house

£34.99 Out Now

Mouse/Keyboard/Joystick

MEMORY 1Mb | DISKS 4

GRAPHICS 89%

SOUND 87%

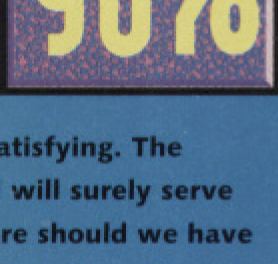


PLAYABILITY 88%

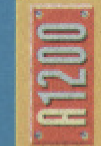
LASTABILITY 90%



OVERALL



90%



As you might expect from a game which relies on complex mathematics, there's plenty of advantages to be gained from running it an A1200. Faster everything is the order of the day here which earns the game an extra couple of per-cent.



D-DAY

The coasts of Normandy, 6th of July, 1944. Matt Broughton joins the frontline as he reviews this arcade/strategy hybrid from US Gold.

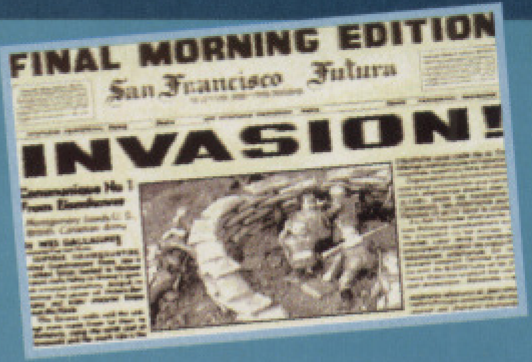
In 1939, Europe refused to see that Germany was a military power that broke non-armament treaties. Whoops. Not a good idea really. Now it's 1944 and The Overlord Operation, controlled by General Eisenhower with the assistance of General Montgomery, has started...

War has been the source of thousands of fictional and non-fictional books, the basis for hundreds of films, and the background for some of the world's greatest adventure heroes - some fictional and some not. It seems that no matter how long ago a conflict actually occurred the interest is always there.

Today's games' scene is no different from Hollywood, with computerised versions of anything from the recent Gulf conflict back to Roman times. All that's missing is, say, a Track and Field variant where you have to get Sir Douglas Bader to the end of his bedroom in under six minutes. Sick, I know, but a good visual gag. I could go on for ages about sick war games that I've thought of - Missile Command with St Paul's Cathedral and Doodlebugs, etc - but I've only just started here and don't want to get the sack just yet.

Anyway, where was I? Oh yes, it's D-Day, and US Gold's game of the same name puts you in command of the Allied forces during those historic landings on the Normandy coast. You can choose to attempt the Overlord Operation as a whole or take the Operation's four main sections - controlling infantry units, dropping paratroopers, driving tanks or flying bombers - and practice each of them separately.

As you might have guessed D-Day's one of those arcade/strategy games, with the overall tactical gameplay punctuated by action sequences that affect the outcome of the battle. But will it make the fatal mistake of falling betwixt those two very different stools? Aaah, well...

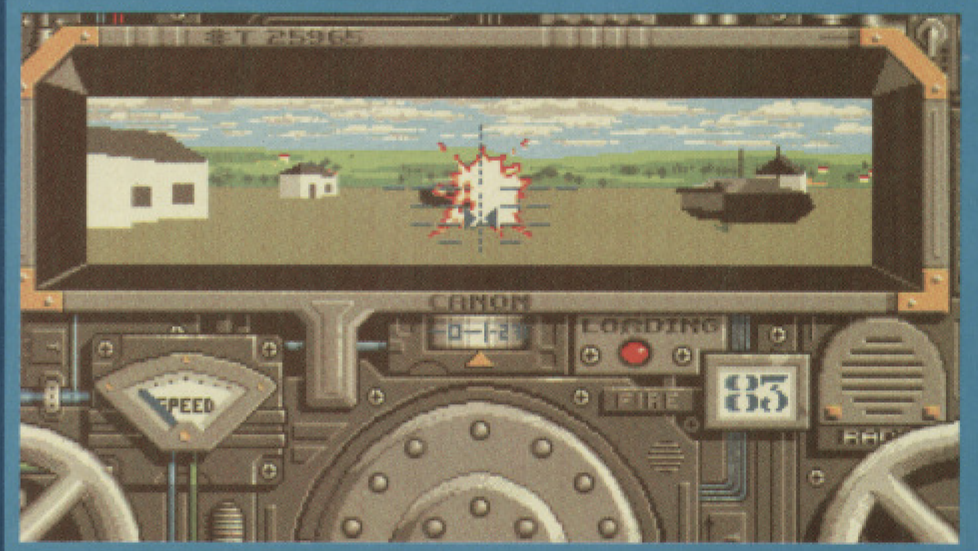

FINAL MORNING EDITION

San Francisco Futura

INVASION!

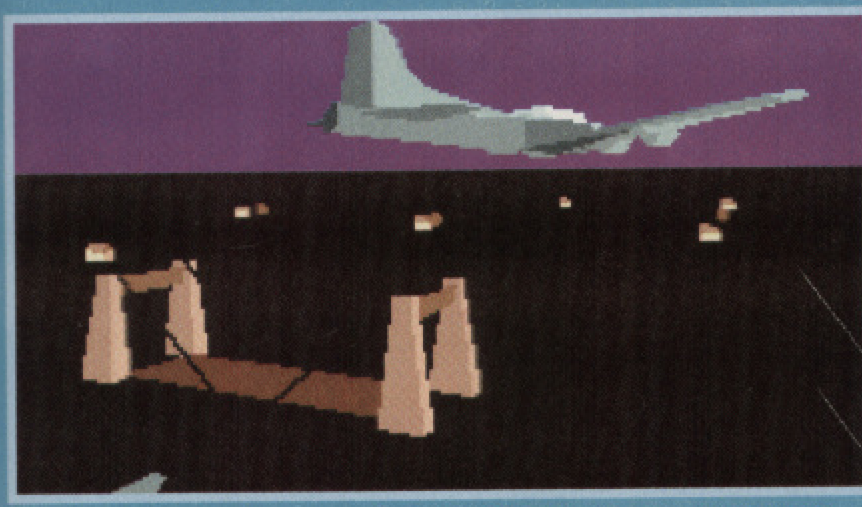
Some of the nicer touches of the game are the pre-battle information shots which run as news reel-type flashes. This one is letting you know that you are about to embark upon an infantry-related mission. It's also accompanied by some Pathe News/Lemmings-type music. Let's go!

(Right)Here it is your duty to guide the paratroopers down to the specific target area marked out by the Resistance. Any paratrooper falling outside of this area is considered lost. Their trajectories are influenced by the way they manipulate their parachutes and by the horizontal or vertical winds. By selecting each separate trooper and using the direction buttons, you must keep them over the target. Unfortunately Corporal Johnson is about to do his pizza impersonation.



(Left) In the tank missions different views are available which give access to the different weapons. This is the screen for the cannon, which contains relevant battle information (i.e. number of shells, speed, heading, etc) and, more importantly, the static sights for targeting enemy tanks. From here you can also select the machine gun, the periscope and the cockpit and also bring up a map that allows you to give movement orders to other tanks in your platoon as well as letting you check the position of all enemy tanks and landscape features.

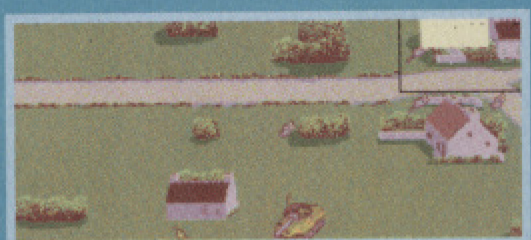




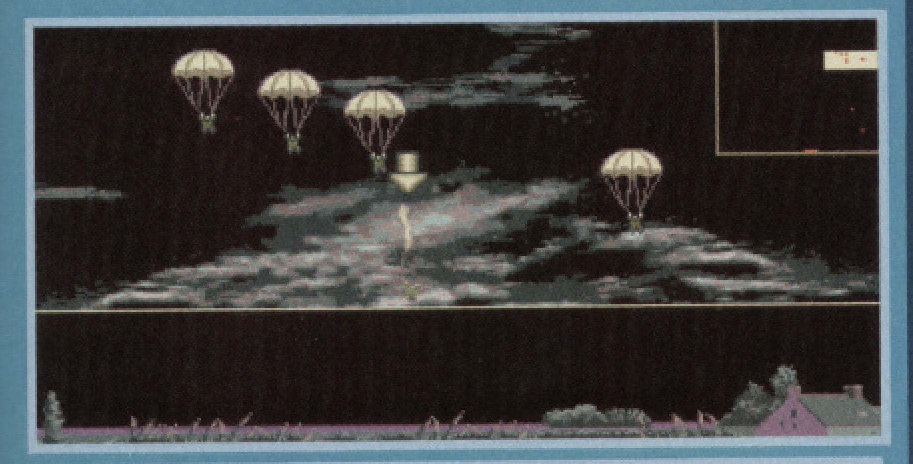
Here we see the bomber on a mission to take out a bridge, thus slowing enemy tanks down. You can view the plane from any angle as the camera view can be panned around 360°, but the rear view is the most effective. Any targets are indicated by green arrows above their positions. Flying low makes the bombing more easy (as long as you don't go too low!), and that's all for the better because you only have a set number of bombs for each mission.

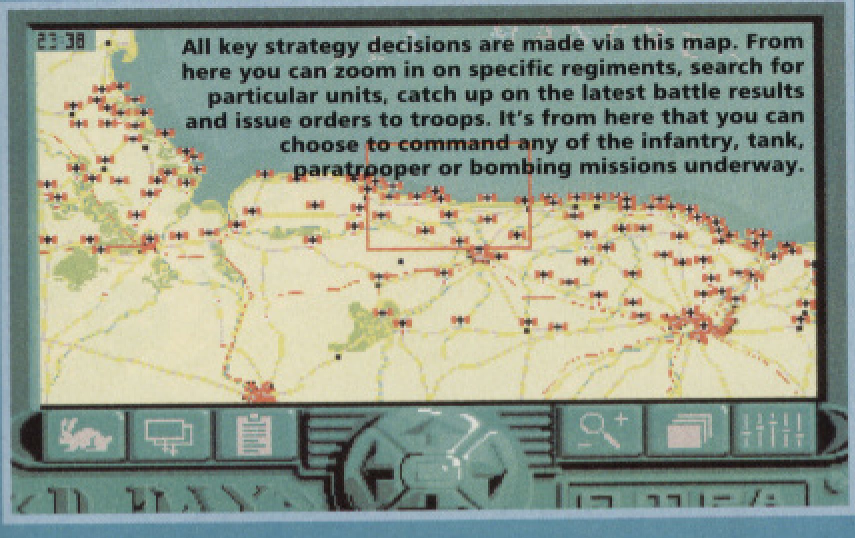


One of the views available to the tanks is an external view, which can be used to get a more accurate picture of enemy tanks and buildings around your immediate area. As with the bomber's view, you can pan around the chosen unit, though unfortunately you can't control any of the tank's actions.



In the infantry sub-section you may be in control of anything from one lone Tommy to a full unit of soldiers, depending upon the mission. Each one has to be sent on his way individually. The scanner in the top right gives key positions and can be toggled on and off if it gets in the way. The bottom of the screen houses the main arrows that control the screen scroll and also gives information about the current unit's action and skill type - this one is a sniper. To the right are the options for guns, grenades, mortar or a nice English cuppa. Good show, chaps.

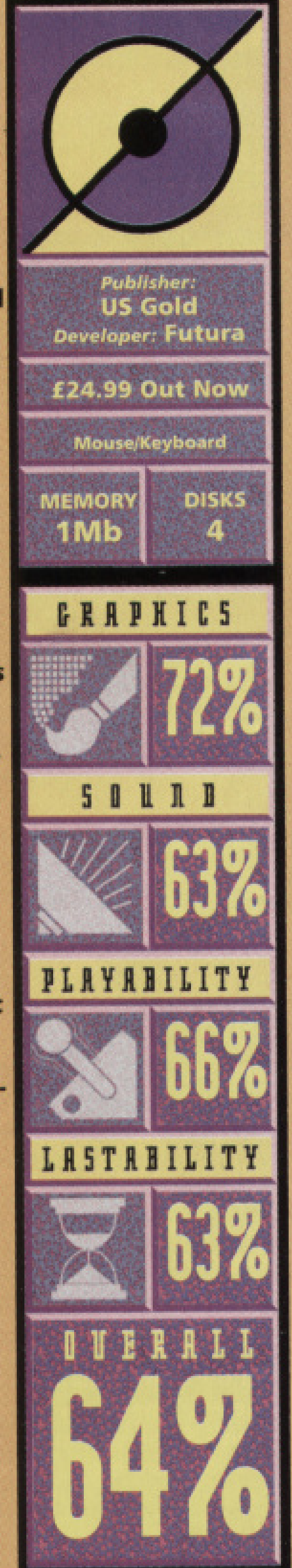




All key strategy decisions are made via this map. From here you can zoom in on specific regiments, search for particular units, catch up on the latest battle results and issue orders to troops. It's from here that you can choose to command any of the infantry, tank, paratrooper or bombing missions underway.

THE VERDICT

I want to say something nice about this as it seems as though someone has spent a fair amount of time researching the game's background. Unfortunately it just doesn't come together. The overall presentation and some of the missions are nicely done but ultimately it's let down by some crumbly old-looking game graphics. The infantry movement section is badly hampered by the poor control system which seems to do it's best to make strategy impossible; the screen won't scroll without the mouse leaving the action to find the scroll arrows - something that can easily loose you a unit - and the mouse-controlled cursor drags around the screen desperately trying to catch up with your movements. Explosions 'pop' around you without any real indication to their source, and the enemy don't seem to move - they just lie on the floor waiting for you to get close enough to shoot. The paratrooper section seems to be a 'quaint' Lunar Lander-type idea, with the troops just needing to be nudged in the right direction so that they drop onto the target. Apart from the occasional gust of wind blowing you off course for a couple of seconds, there isn't really much else to be said. The bomber run features a well-drawn plane and a pitch black screen but precious little to actually do. Finally, the tank sim is not too bad and looks good but, again, the control system kicks it down. You can't initiate movement or shoot cannons without changing your view selection - something that causes the machine to load from disc for a few seconds which is a real pain. While I'm talking about disks, you do need to swap between the four disks every time you opt to join a battle, make a new selection or die. If you really love this sort of game and still fancy it after a gander at the screen shots you may possibly find some enjoyment here. I don't and I didn't.



Publisher: US Gold
Developer: Futura

£24.99 Out Now

Mouse/Keyboard

MEMORY	DISKS
1Mb	4

GRAPHICS 72%

SOUND 63%

PLAYABILITY 66%

LASTABILITY 63%

OVERALL 64%



A1200

Exactly the same as far as I could see. Even though you'd hope that the 3D sections might be a bit improved they don't seem any different at all.

SYNDI[CATE]

Phew! They say big business can be murder and, as Bullfrog's latest shows, they're not kidding! David Upchurch is the man at the board meeting with the flame-thrower...

Okay, so you've heard of having a chip on your shoulder but what do you think about having one implanted in your brain. This, you see, is the basic premise of Bullfrog's newy Syndicate. I have to admit that, at first, the idea didn't appeal to me much. I once had a chip stuck in my ear and I got grease in my hair and ketchup all over my shirt so Lord knows what sort of mess one inside my head would make.

It was only after reading the game's manual that I realised they were talking about SILICON chips. Not as tasty, admittedly, but far cleaner at least. These chips are the Virtual Reality freak's dream. They alter the implantee's perceptions, giving them an perpetually rose-tinted view of the world. Flowers in bloom, the scent of new-mown grass in the air, happy smiling people, no REM records... that sort of thing.

And in the future this isn't so much a luxury, it's a necessity. We're in Bladerunner territory here, you see, with endless sheets of searing acid rain falling on the grungey streets and the grungier inhabitants. Imagine spending your whole life in Scunthorpe and you'll get some idea of just how bad things have become.

Of course, it wasn't long before the globe-spanning megacorporations, which had long been more powerful than any government, realised that this chip could be used to control the masses, turning them into the perfect consumer. As the megacorporations fought for power their methods became more and more violent, with small armies being sent into rival-occupied territories to kill or kidnap key research personnel, destroy major installations and eventually seize control.

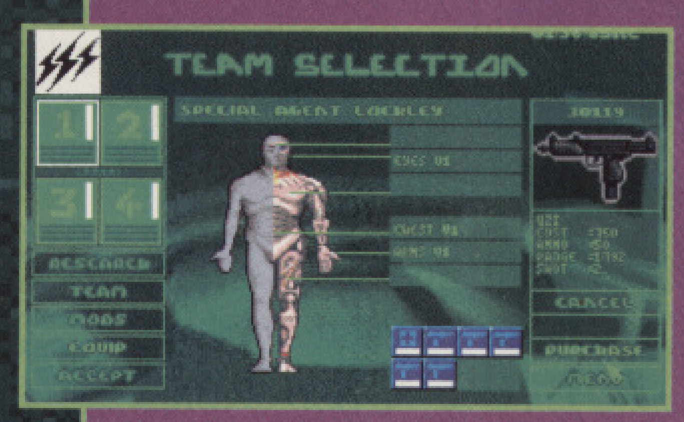
In the game you assume the role of boss in one of the smaller corporations. Small you may be but your ambitions are big - it's your aim to spread your corporation across the world! The ultimate monopoly!

To help you do this you have a small army of cybernetically-enhanced henchmen. Once they've been sent on a mission you control their actions by remote control from the safety of your boardroom control centre. By altering the input from the chips implanted in their brains you can turn them from stealthy assassins into rampaging psychopaths and all points in-between - whatever you see necessary to achieve your aims.

Welcome, then, to the world of Syndicate...



Having selected a mission by clicking on an enemy-held territory on the world map you are given a briefing as to what you must achieve to conquer it. The missions range from relatively passive 'get in and get out quickly' affairs, such as kidnapping a rival scientist, to more gung-ho 'slaughter everything' scenarios. If you don't fancy your chances you can always slip back to the map and pick another mission.



You start the game with eight cybernetic warriors in your army, of whom a maximum of four can be sent into any mission. It's a good idea to tool them up before you go, as fisticuffs according to the Marquis of Queensbury's rules is well out of fashion. This is, naturally, where you do it. Initially your armoury consists of a few feeble pistols and shotguns but, with a bit of money invested in research and development, it won't be long before you're toting UZIs and flame throwers. You can also further enhance the agents' bodies with varying grades of artificial limbs, allowing them to run faster, carry more weapons and take more hits. Again, they all cost cash, as does developing them.

(Above) Looking like a (not very) futuristic version of the Risk boardgame, this is the world map showing you which megacorporation 'owns' each territory. Those areas in white are the one's controlled by little ol' me. The manual speaks of spreading your 'dark stain' across the map as you successfully complete missions and expand, but I prefer to think of it as a 'white with a hint of apple green' stain. Revenue can be created by taxing your subjects, but don't overdo it or they'll revolt, meaning you have to try and complete that territory's mission again.



This is it, then - action at last. By moving the mouse pointer to the edges of the screen you can scroll around at will. Clicking on the landscape with the left mouse button moves the currently-selected agent, while clicking on a target with the right mouse button unleashes whichever weapon you've highlighted from their inventory (shown below the agent status panels). If you want you can highlight all the assassins for group movements.



CATE

You can affect each agent's brain using the three bars below their portrait. The top one is intelligence, which governs how they'll react to a certain situation. The middle one is perception, which alters the precision of their firing and how early they'll alert to danger. The third and final bar is adrenaline, and this affects their speed and reactions. These bars, when altered, will always try to return to 'normal' (as indicated by the white line) so you'll have to keep 'topping them up'. Trouble is, repeated use of the high settings drag the 'normal' bar up, meaning that the agent becomes less effective, so you can't just keep turning the bars to maximum all the time.

The cities in Syndicate are 'real' places. People mill about doing their daily errands, ride around in cars and even take the train. You can do likewise, and often these rail-bound shuttles are the only way for you to access the more remote areas of your current combat arena. The populous... sorry, populace... react to your presence like a normal person would, i.e. they run away screaming when you get a gun out.





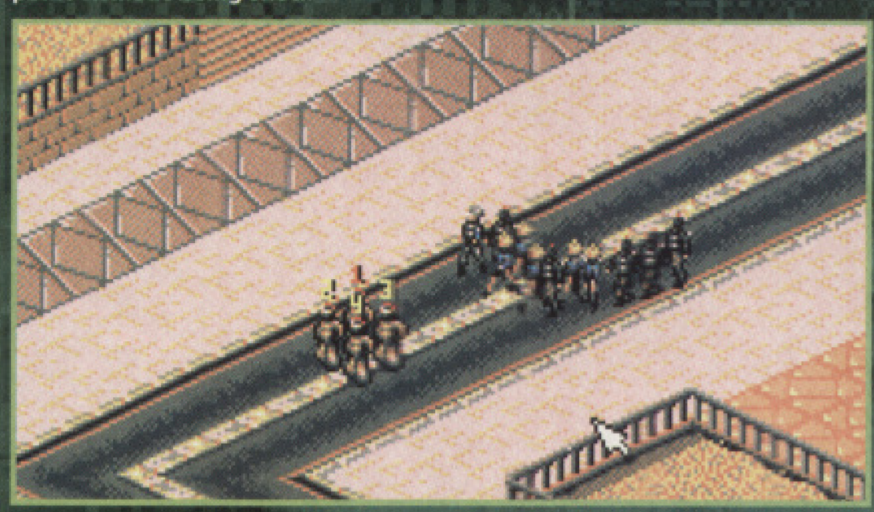
(Above) The police, recognisable by their grey uniforms, patrol the streets on the look-out for any criminals or gun-waving company agents. If you start a firefight with rival agents chances are they'll get in on the action too, firing indiscriminately at you and your enemies. If you manage to develop a pass, however, it's possible to fool the cops into thinking you're on their side and effectively enlist them as your private army!

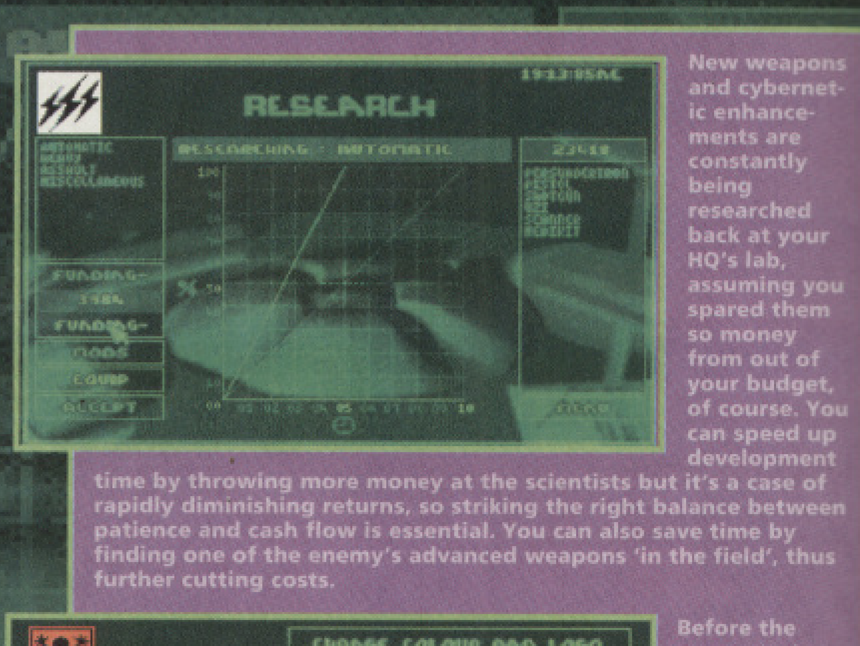
(Left) Your team of agents will often come across a neglected family saloon or even police car. You can then hop in and take off, using the mouse pointer to guide the footsore boys on a sight-seeing tour of the city. It's also a handy for zooming past enemy agents and taking them out as you drive by. Be careful you don't take too much damage back, though, or it'll go up with a bang, taking your agents with it.



RESEARCH

(Below) The Persuadertron is one of the most useful 'weapons' you can by. Anybody zapped by its rays becomes a mindless zombie and will slavishly follow your party about wherever it goes. This is generally the way you kidnap rival company scientists - you break into the lab, zap the poor geezer then lead him away. The tricky thing is getting him back to the pick-up point without being shot..

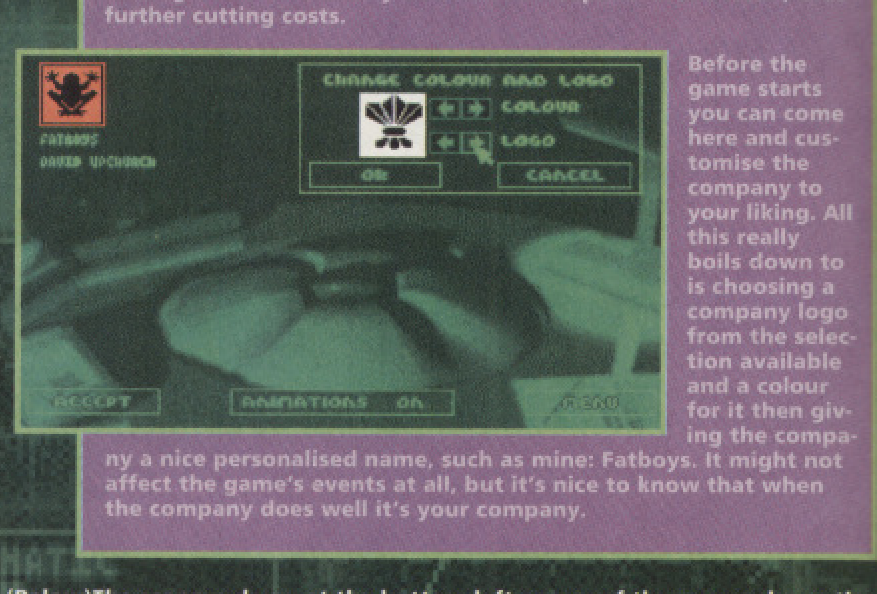




New weapons and cybernetic enhancements are constantly being researched back at your HQ's lab, assuming you spared them so money from out of your budget, of course. You can speed up development time by throwing more money at the scientists but it's a case of rapidly diminishing returns, so striking the right balance between patience and cash flow is essential. You can also save time by finding one of the enemy's advanced weapons 'in the field', thus further cutting costs.

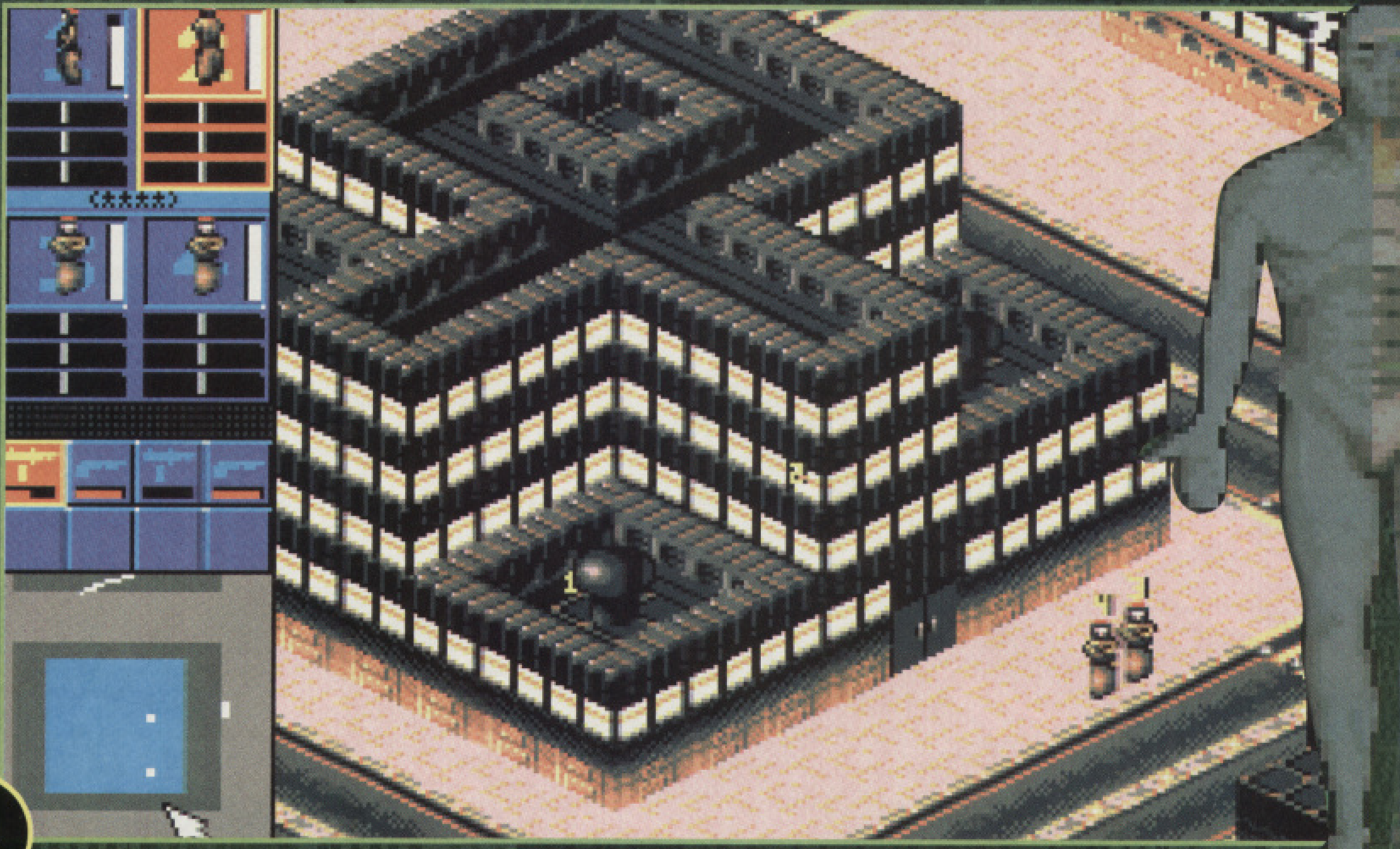
(Below) Blimey! What a mess! Slain agents and civilians don't flash and disappear like in most shoot-'em-ups. Oh no, they stay where they fell, a grim reminder of your violent actions. But it's not all doom and gloom - you can loot the twitching corpses for spare weapons and maybe even one that your R&D haven't invented yet, speeding up development time back at the labs.

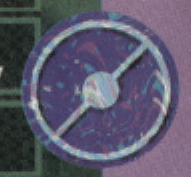


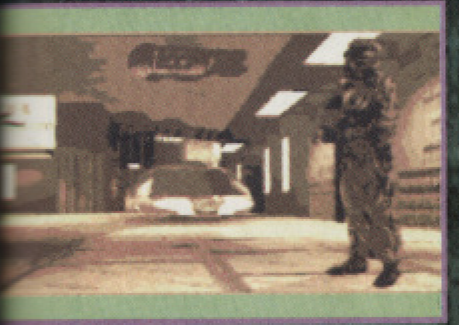


Before the game starts you can come here and customise the company to your liking. All this really boils down to is choosing a company logo from the selection available and a colour for it then giving the company a nice personalised name, such as mine: Fatboys. It might not affect the game's events at all, but it's nice to know that when the company does well it's your company.

(Below)The scanner down at the bottom-left corner of the screen shows the position on your agents and those of the civilians, police officers and enemy agents. More usefully it points you in the direction of your next mission objective, whether it be a scientist to kill or the pick=up point. It's particularly useful if one of your agents has to enter a building - you can't see inside so you have to guide him to any targets using the scanner and, of course, your skill and judgement

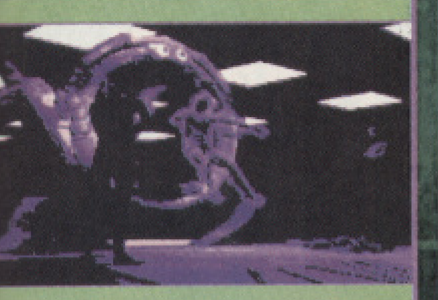




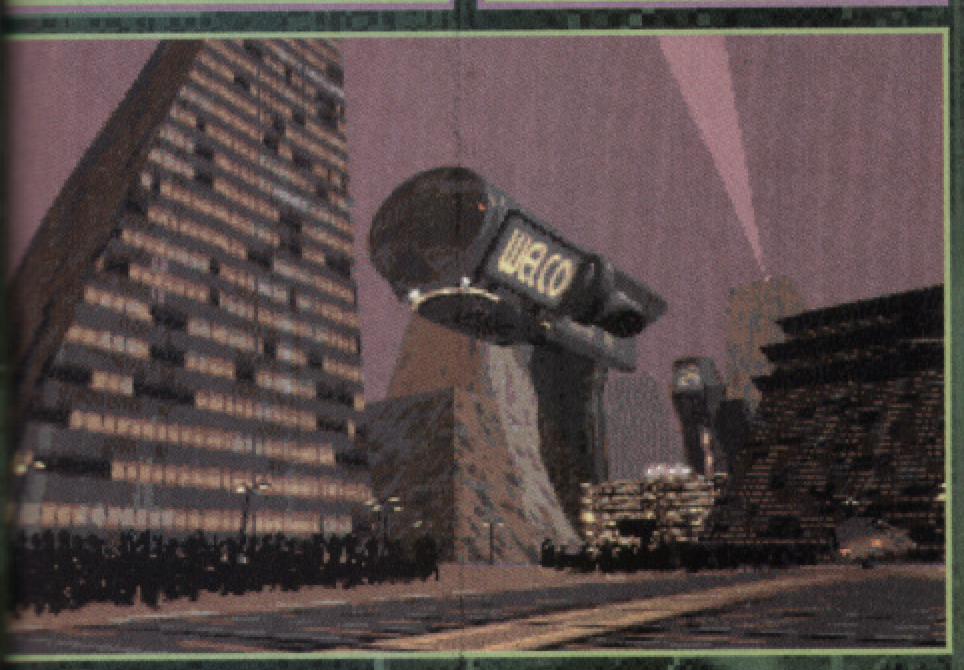




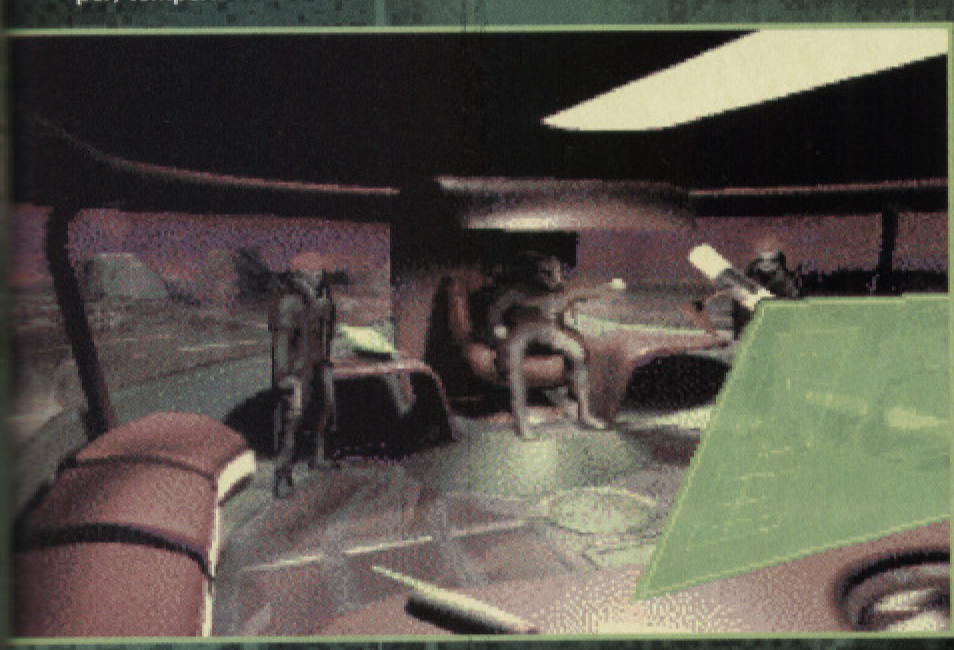
The moody intro shows the abduction of an innocent civilian and their metamorphosis into a ruthless Syndicate agent. First a car zooms up to the hapless bloke and whisks him away to a corporation HQ. Once inside, his body is pinned to a bizarre mechanical contraption that strips his limbs clean of flesh and replaces them with cybernetic enhancements. The last image you see is of the masked agent holding a laser-targetted handgun. It's all very sinister and not a little disturbing.







Complete a mission and that territory becomes yours, giving you more willing subjects to tax until their pips squeak. Success is signified by this shot of the company HQ with cars flying by - not much of a reward, is it? Fail, on the other hand, and you get to see yourself fly into a rage and throw a lamp at the holographic viewer of your control centre. Now, now, Mr Boss - temper, temper.



THE VERDICT

As you'd expect from Bullfrog, the creators of Populous and Powermonger, Syndicate is a highly-polished game and no mistake. The monochrome animated intro sets the dark mood wonderfully and this is sustained in the game itself, even if the gantry-n'-girder cities do look more like over-populated steel refineries than thriving conurbations. Syndicate is a relatively 'easy to get into' game. The first mission or two you can forget about the fiddling with the agents' brains or all that research business and just wander around killing things. It's only later - when, presumably, you'll have got used to the well-thought-out controls - that you have to start messing around with all that complex-looking stuff, and even then you find it's a lot less tricky than it appears. In fact, it's good fun. By varying the IPA bars you'll soon be able to make your agents do just about whatever you want - it's a clever idea and it really works well, giving the player a lot of leeway for real tactical and strategic decision making. If I'm honest I could have done without the Risk-style world domination bit and the weapons research - it's just gets in the way of the action in my book. I'd have preferred new weapons to have been introduced at set points during the course of the game but that's just my opinion. Also, on the subject of dislikes, I have to say that the isometric-3D view, though pretty, can be confusing and it's not unusual to be caught with your pants down by a baddy that you didn't see just because he's standing behind a wall. Unfair. Those moans aside Syndicate is a brilliant game. It may not be quite in the league of Bullfrog's other hits but it's a close run thing and, I must admit, there's not many games that have kept me glued to the monitor screen for as long or as keenly as Syndicate did. Good, violent stuff.

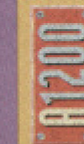
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Bullfrog

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Mouse

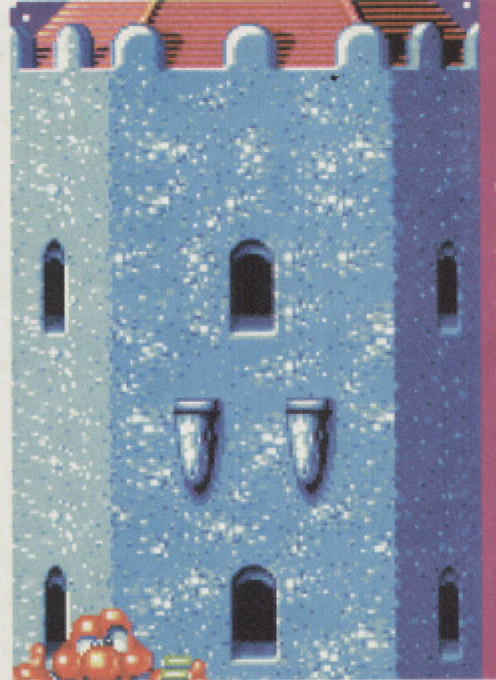
MEMORY	DISKS
1Mb	4

GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	90%
LASTABILITY	85%
OVERALL	88%



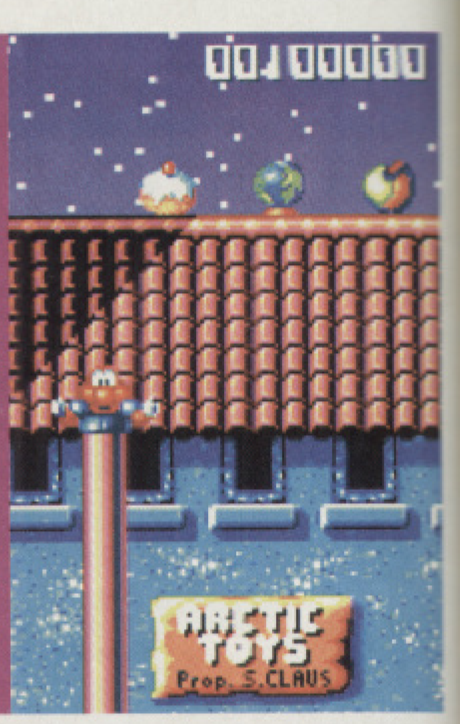
A1200

Don't fret, A1200 owners, the enhanced version of Syndicate is coming your way soon, with lush hi-res graphics and meatier sound. If you can't wait, though, the normal version works fine.



UPDATES

This month presents us with only one A1200-specific release to look at, so come with me now as we travel back in time to when platform games were everywhere and fish were common plaice. Yes, the man who made the smell of fish and seaweed socially acceptable is back. No, not David Upchurch - James Pond. Updated for todays seafood requirements, he's back with a vengeance on the A1200. Matt Broughton gets used to the smell and takes a look.



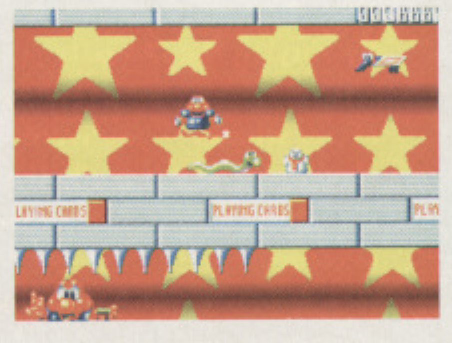
ROBOCOD

"So Mr Pond, we meet again". "Yesh Mishter Maybe, but thish time I have the advantage - My worshening shpeech impediment. Shaushagesh."

There's a nasty man about, don't y'know. I mean it's Christmas - well I know it isn't now, but it was at the time (December as I remember) - and this nasty piece of work wants to put an end to presents.

You might recognise his name - Dr Maybe. Yeah, thought you might. He's a git, isn't he? Well anyway, as I was saying, he has taken it upon himself to sabotage the world's largest toy manufacturer by planting penguin-bombs in the Santa's factories inside the North Pole. You, as James Pond, must don a high-tech suit of armour and bubble your way North to thwart his dastardly plot, as FI5H agent ROBOCOD. Hurrah!

When Robocod was first released on the A500, we gave it an overall mark of 93% and dubbed it "one of the most addictive games to date... One of the best". That was a fair while back as far as software goes, so now that it's been updated to the A1200 you'll no doubt be wondering how much it's improved against how much it's aged.





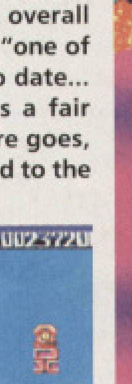
Well, the game remains much the same as the original with James using his jumping and stretching abilities to collect all the dynamite-laden penguins that have been planted in the toy factory by Dr Maybe. All the while pick-uppable goodies are available to Mr Pond, spread over the many platforms and bridges that make up each level. So what has been updated?

Firstly the guys at Millennium have added an extra five larger-than-life levels resplendent in full 256 colours - copper toning and all - to the previously available fifty. Secondly, a large proportion of the original level's graphics have been given the A1200 treatment, with the introduction of sharper backgrounds and general tweaking.

Other than that, this remains much as it was at its birth many moons ago. The game's speed has been left to run at the same rate as the original, and James performs as magnificently as normal.

Yes, Robocod has aged, but it's still an excellent platform romp with a wide and varied offering of levels. I don't feel there's enough here to encourage owners of the first Robocod to buy for a second time, but I would have no hesitation in recommending this for the first-timers out for a good platformer.

OVERALL: 82%

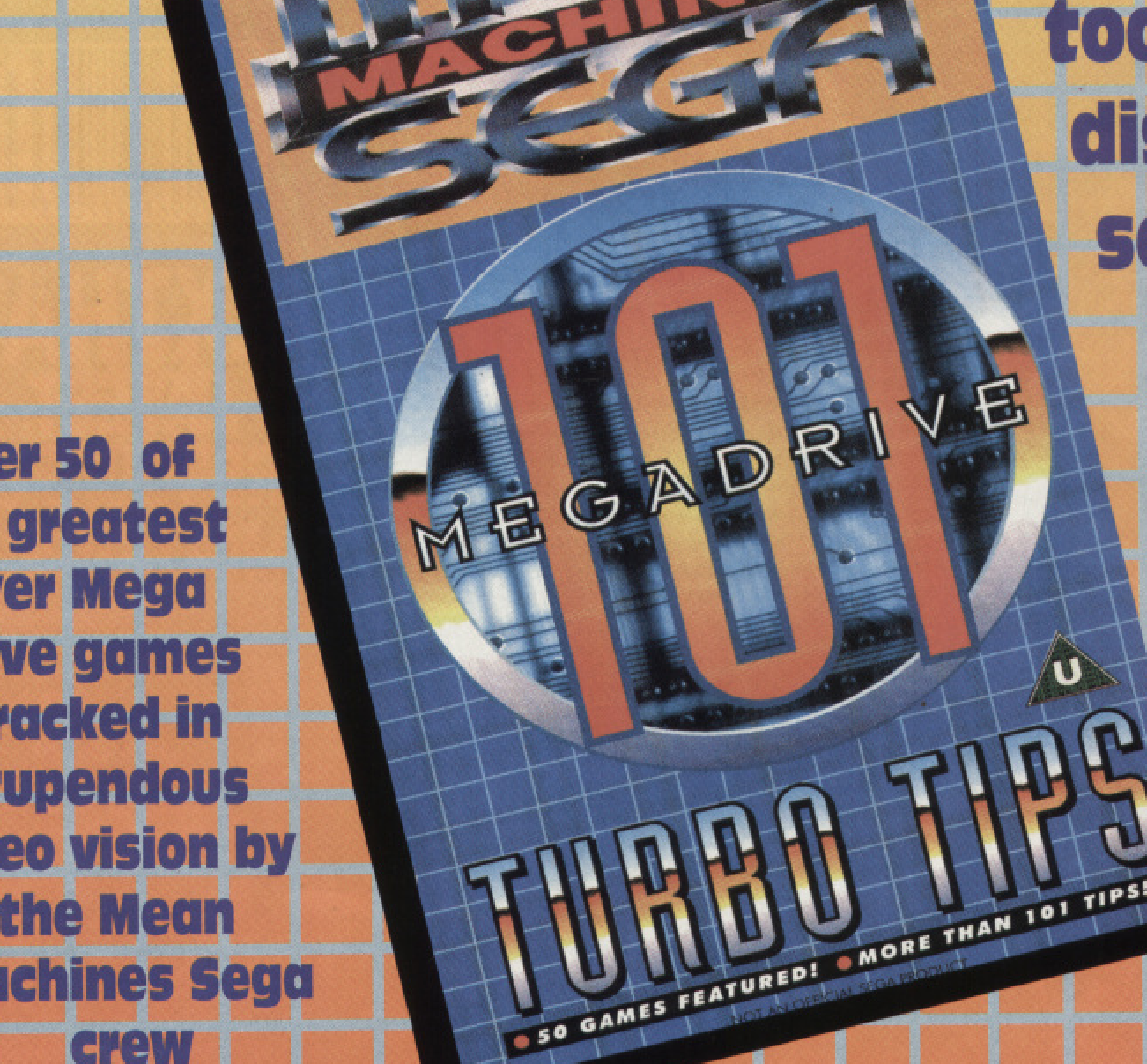






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This particular section of the magazine has inspired many songs, you know, such is its popularity. Dexy's Midnight Runners sang "Oh Cheapos", Simple Minds covered a Peter Gabriel track entitled, rather subtly we think, "Cheapo" and that's all we can think of at the moment. Never mind, on with this month's selection of not-expensive software.

TOKI

The Hit Squad £9.99

The hero of this piece was once a proud man. A handsome man. A tall man. He was loved by a beautiful woman called Miho who wasn't quite as handsome - or as tall for that matter - but was none-the-less fairly proud. Enter stage right some git called Bashtar who fancies Miho and unfortunately has the power to turn our stout yeoman into a stooping, hairy, spitting ape.

No, this isn't another Gazza licensed game, but the budget release of the classic platform oldie, Toki. This game has been a much loved coin-op, appeared on a wide range of formats including hand-held versions and now comes to us again on budget release thanks to Ocean.

You'll need to make your way through seven levels, each large and varied, in an attempt to recapture your missus, not to mention your humanity - nay, your very being. The nasty wizard chap did you a bit of a favour by turning you into an ape, as you've inherited all the attributes of that multi-talented primate. Like, crazy, huh?

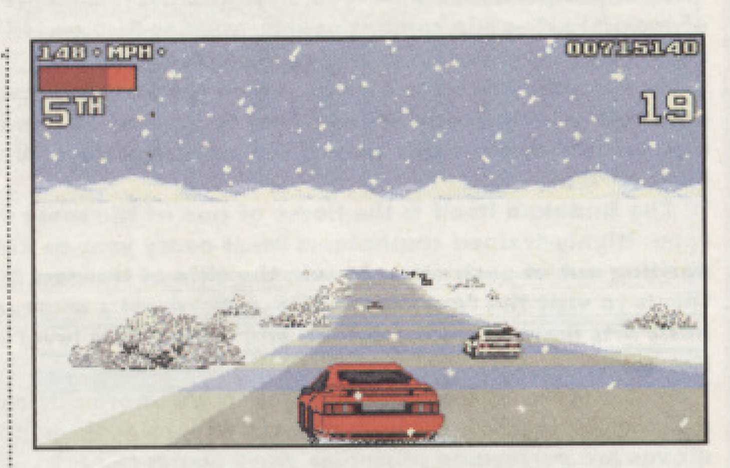




You'll need to swing over fiery pits by rope, swim across expanses of water, ride on runaway carts and generally bounce across the varying landscapes to reach your appointment with destiny. As you might expect, there's more than just tricky scenery to be negotiated as many weird and wonderful animals and 'things' have been left in your path to slow you down. This is where that spit I mentioned comes in useful - it's death-dealing properties manage to see off most baddies.

Considering Toki's age, this is an excellent platformer which hardly seems to have dated at all. The levels offer so many different things to deal with it puts some of the more recent platform releases to shame by comparison. Toki jumps, ducks and performs superbly with no inertia or stupid slippery ice worlds to deal with at all. It takes one back to the days of the C64 when platforms were platforms and men spat. Excellent value and an excellent romp. [MB]





LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2

GBH £9.99

There can be few Amiga products that need less of an introduction than this. Workbench perhaps, but only by a small margin. If you've ever played a game, then there's a solid chance that it was one of Gremlin's flagship titles from the Lotus series.

Lotus 2 is probably the one most fondly remembered, as it took all the playability of the original and put it in one of the most original driving scenarios since the Great American Road Race. Rather than have you racing around a series of looped tracks as part of a league, Lotus takes you on a continent-wide race through some of the most treacherous terrain since EA's Apache cleaned up the Gulf.

Thanks to an ingenious link-up system up to four players can race at once against the clock through the vast multi-stage courses that take you through the city at night, through the thickest fog yet seen, down some very twisty mountain roads in the snow and finally through the marshes. If you like you can race for points but it seems achievment enough to just complete the race.

The nicest thing about Lotus 2 is the fact that, even after Lotus 3 and Jaguar XJ220, it hasn't aged in the slightest. It still seems as smooth and realistic as ever. Even after playing it for so long when it appeared in full price, I still get a kick out of the mountain stages. If you don't have it, what have you been using your Amiga for? [DU]

OVERALL 93%



CHEAPOS!

BUDOKAN - The Martial Spirit

The Hit Squad Platinum £12.99

This game had a mixed bag of reviews when it first appeared some four years ago. Me? I liked it, and it's nice to see that I still enjoyed it in my slightly more mature years. Originally, it appeared just after the huge tide of martial arts-style combat games, such as Fist and IK+, and aimed to take everything they had done and do it better.

As a result, you have a game which features at least five different martial arts, four of which you are required to master, and some of the most mismatched combat this side of the infamous David Upchurch vs Nerys Hughes bout of '81.

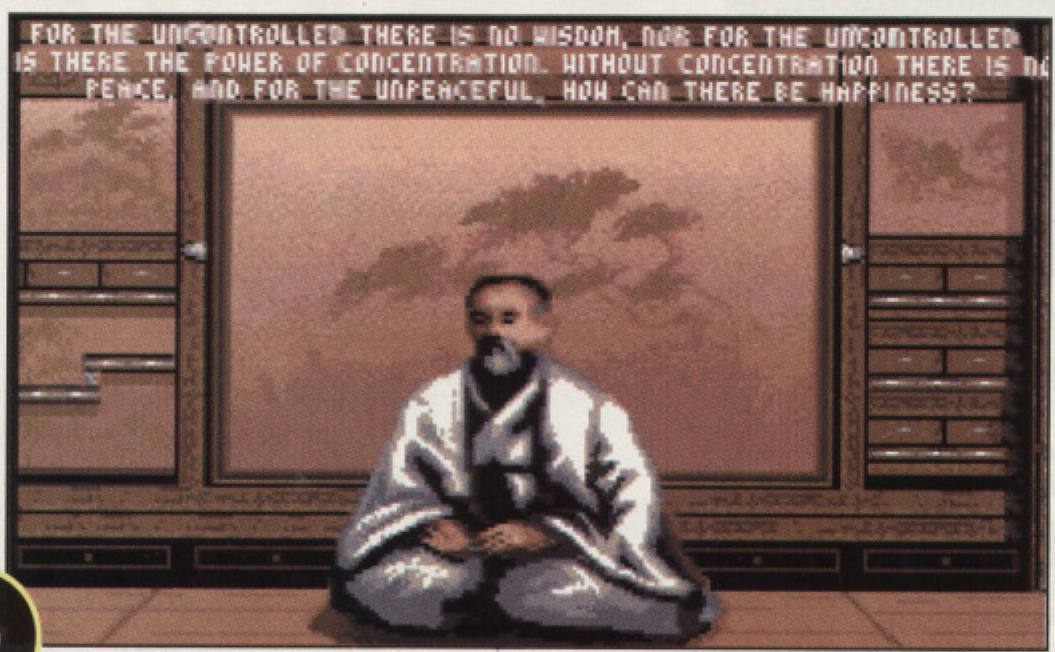
The Budokan itself is the home of one of the most violent tournaments ever seen. Highly-trained combateers meet every year to kick/punch/slap/poke the stuffing out of each other to win the title of Hardest Man Alive. Your part in all this is to visit the four dojos scattered around a courtyard and master the four basic arts (karate, nunchuka, bo and kendo) to a level where you can take on the best.

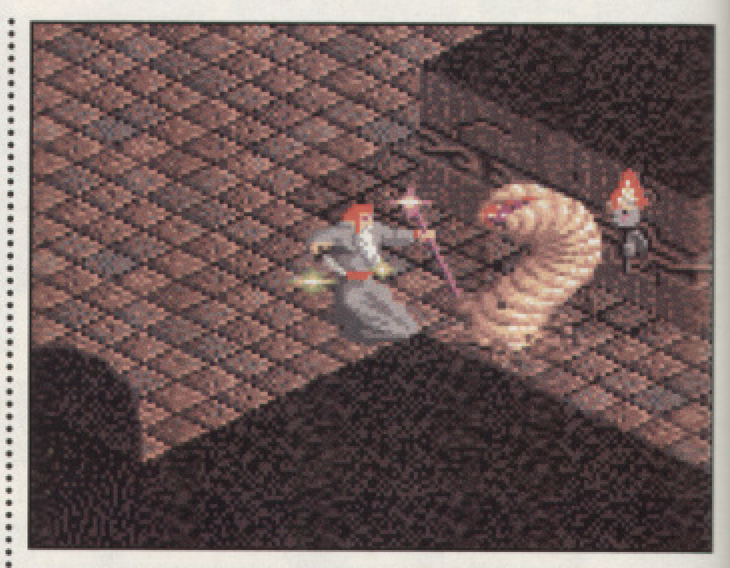
Each art has at least twenty moves, the more difficult ones performed by moving the joystick through a series of two or three positions. Thankfully, most moves are performed in similar ways across the arts.

Once you have completed your training you can enter the competition itself, against some of the baddest dudes this side of Streetfighter 2. This is where things get really interesting. Although not as playable as the aforementioned classic, Budokan is still a very enjoyable beat-'em-up, with enough twists to keep you playing. A little dated in placed, but still worth getting hold of. [SB]

OVERALL 81%



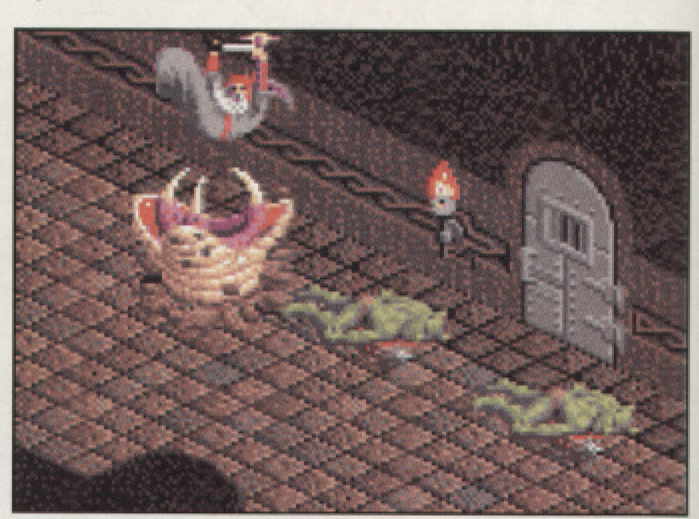




THE IMMORTAL

The Hit Squad Platinum £12.99

If, like me, you love any sort of game involving spell casting and the graphic rewards that they can bring, you'll probably enjoy this Electronic Arts' budget offering. The old wizard Mordamir, your master, mentor and friend, has not been seen for many years and is assumed dead. That is until he calls to you in your dreams, leaving you with the uneasy feeling that he may still be alive, trapped in the labyrinth under the ancient city of Erinoch.



This is a graphic adventure in the style of Shadowlands, i.e. isometric-3D scrolling dungeons, with some excellent graphical treats that should satisfy the necromancer in all of you. Even though magic is your speciality, you're a bit tasty with a sword and can slash and stab with the best of them when it comes to it (and it will). For most part, the game centres around solving small puzzles, using the right item at the right time or killing the right thing in the right place.

The supplied instructions are good, walking you through the first few rooms giving instructions on how to deal with each problem encountered. The second half of the manual is presented as The Codex of the Serpent, which contains notes made by Mordamir to explain the mysteries of the dark labyrinth (it says here). This contains hand-drawn pictures, maps and hints giving clues on how to overcome some of each levels problems. You will also have access to a password system once you've got further into the game.

This is one of the more graphically rewarding games of its genre, making good use of the spell potential and incidental effects. My only real grumble is how easy it is to loose large amounts of vitality in one fight, making you hide like a coward until it's topped up a bit. Other than that, this is a good £12.99's worth of fantasy fun. [MB]

OVERALL 88%

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

The Hit Squad £12.99

The quest for the ultimate Mario clone really ended when Ocean released this title, based on the movie of the TV show of the newspaper comic strip of the same name. Generally regarded as one of the finest platform games ever released on the Amiga, the Addams Family tells of the ghoulish Gomez's search for the kidnapped members of his family - a search that takes him through some of the nastiest areas of the Addams' Mansion. You just wouldn't believe the kind of junk that can clutter up spare rooms if left alone for long enough!

This is a very big game indeed. Split over seven main areas, each area is broken down ever further in half-a-dozen smaller areas, each a dozen screens long and packed to bursting point with tricks, traps and the deadliest enemy sprites ever seen. This is one game that will take you quite a while to complete!

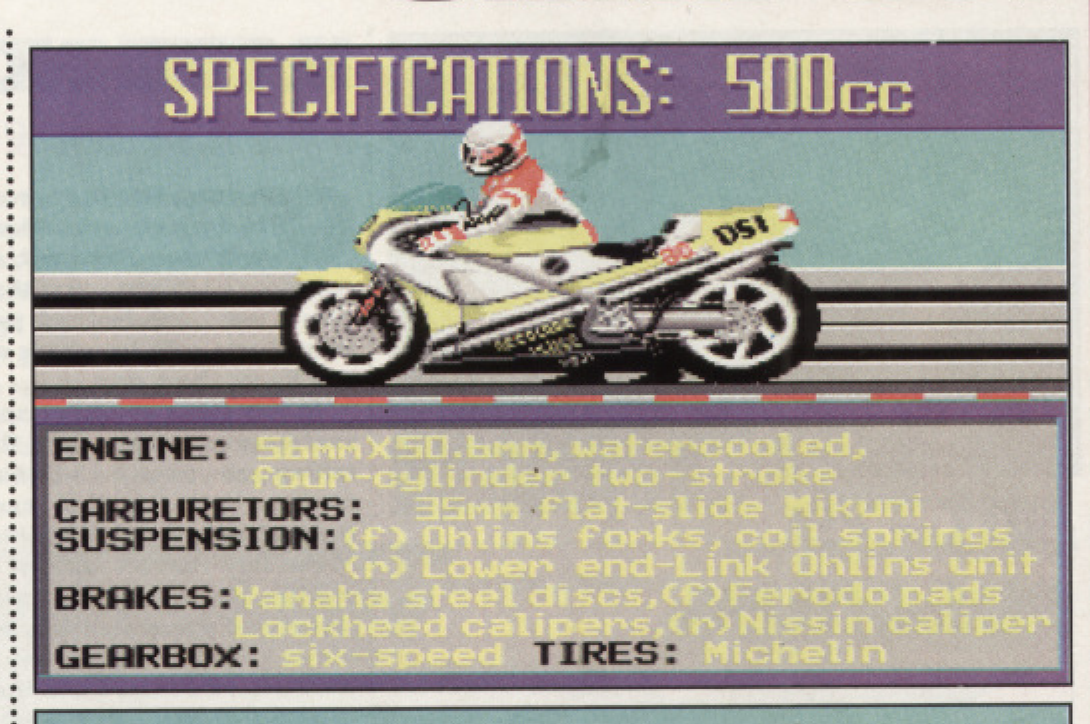
Like Mario, the game it shamelessly emulates, the Addams Family is packed full of all the usual secret rooms and switches that add so much to a game. From the start of the game it's possible to get some forty extra lives just by visiting the correct secret rooms!

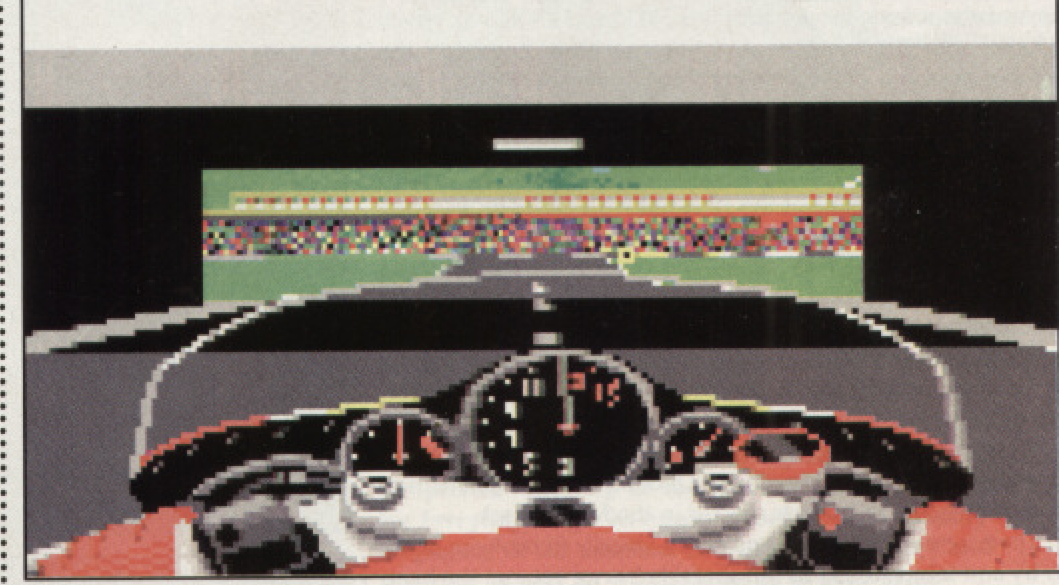
Also, there are more than a few bonuses knocking about, in the form of a Fez which enables Gomez to fly, a circling magic shield that wipes out anything nearby and, of course, dollar signs which power up his energy and give him an extra life for every hundred he collects. It's all good clean fun, and an excellent platform game at that. Don't miss it! [DU]











THE CYCLES

The Hit Squad £9.99

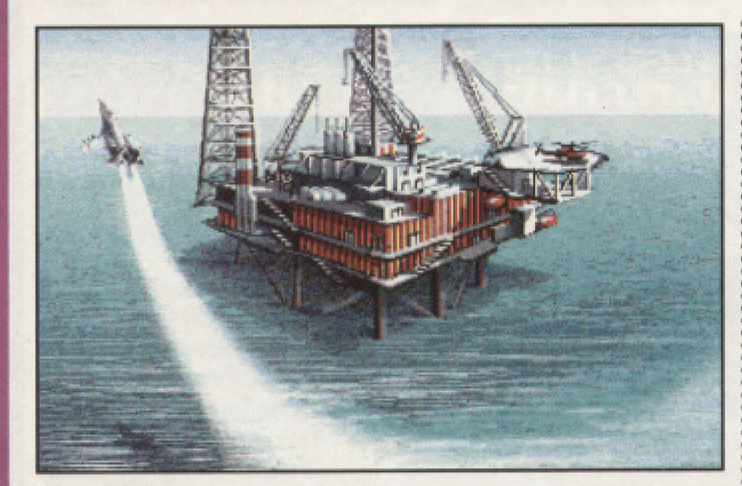
I've always enjoyed bike racing games, which is why this one intrigued me so much. I can remember seeing it when it was released but before I loaded it this time I couldn't remember what it was like. Now I understand why - this is a really bad game. A game that wouldn't look too out of place on a Commodore 64, except that's a slur on the C64.

It's fairly standard fare from the word go. You have three choices of bike (125cc, 250cc and 500cc) and a selection of tracks to race over. The tracks themselves are polygon-based, and the bike cockpit is a bitmapped overlay. Sounds a little like Team Suzuki? You betcha, only Team Suzuki makes this look like the Pizza Express 25cc death machine it really is.

The biggest problem with this game, above any others, is the speed. It is just so slow. The only way I can give you any indication of speed is to get you to load up Microprose Grand Prix and drive around the track of your choice at 60 mph. That is exactly the same as riding a 500cc monster round Silverstone in top gear, apparently.

Then there's the question of sound. I don't know about you, but I like a bike that makes a lot of noise, whereas the bikes in this game seem to have stolen the engine from next door's Allegro. Remember kids, a bike that hums probably has a flap for the 4 AA size batteries. Unplayable and short lived, this is rubbish of the highest ordure. [SB]

OVERALL 36%



MiG-29 FULCRUM

The Hit Squad Platinum £12.99

Oh. I see. I've been here one week and already I've got a flight sim. I just knew that was going to happen. If you read between the lines, you might get the feeling that I'm not a major player in the flight sim world. You'd be right. But with open mind I pried open the 59-page instruction manual and began upon a journey that wasn't to end for many hours - and that was just reading it.

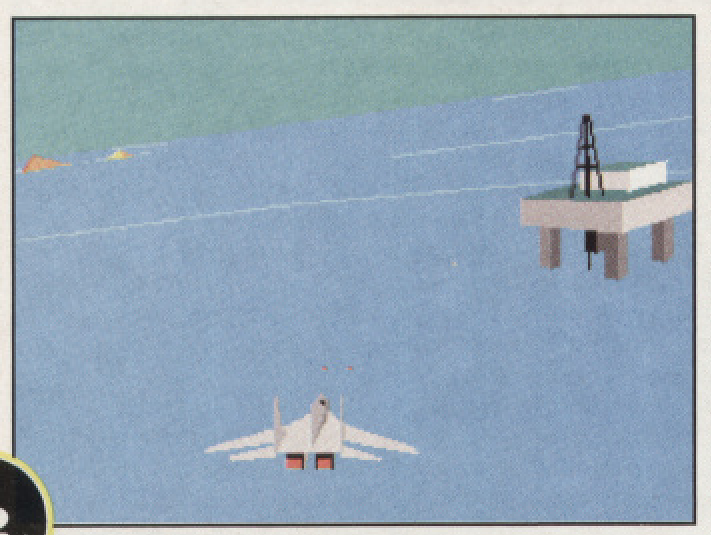
If you're familiar with flight sims, you should be able to get up and about fairly quickly with this old Domark offering, which is based upon the fighter made synonymous with the Soviet Airforce in Korean and Vietnam conflicts. The manual isn't as bad as it first looks and large amounts of technical detail can be skipped over if you just want to take to the skies.

It's hard to say anything about the control system as it seems standard for most sims of this type but with either mouse, joystick or keyboard you take full control of the fighter's flight, weapons and countermeasures. One thing to be mentioned is the use of the numerical keypad for camera views, which is great unless you have an A600 in which case you're left nine views short of a panorama.

Six missions are available to you, accessed through a debriefing room, including one training run with set targets and drones to engage. Missions vary from photographing enemy subs while engaging British Sea Harriers over Siberia to ruining construction of a terrorist's nuclear reactor in the Middle East.

There's not a hell of a lot going on visually (it took me hours to try and take exciting screen shots) but once you get the hang of finding targets, it all seems to come together quite nicely. If I don't mind this then chances are that most people will get some pleasure out of it, especially if you already like flight sims. [MB]





HARD NOVA

The Hit Squad £9.99

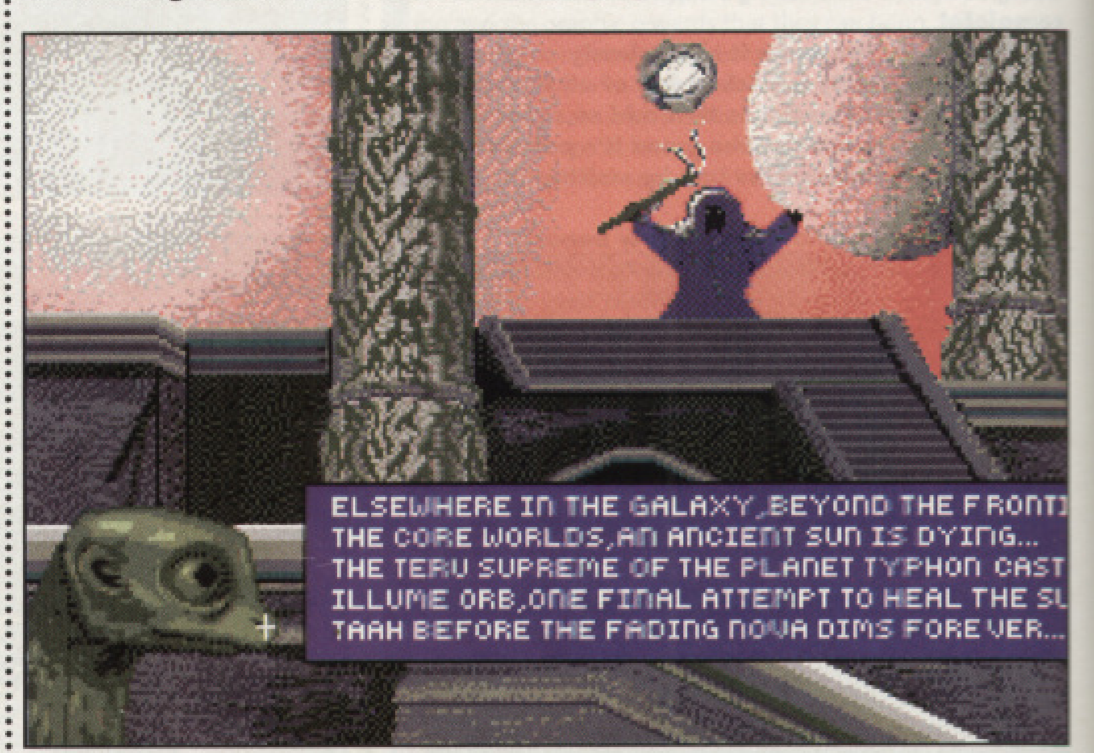
Oh dear. This is a throwback to the days when all Electronic Arts seemed to do was port software from the PC to the Amiga, in the days when PC software was, well, crap to say the least. The biggest problems with PC software of this era was that everything had to have keyboard control so action games were out. Instead, people spent years churning out Ultima-style top view adventures with hundreds of locations and millions of characters and... Well, you know the score.

In this game you are a space mercenary hired occasionally to do large contracts on people. Only the last time you did a contract your ship blew up taking your crew with it. So, the first thing you need to do is wander round the spaceports finding likely candidates for your new ship. Then you can get on with the real adventures that this game undoubtedly has in store for you.

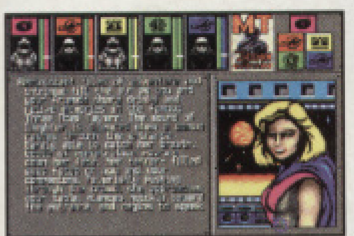
I'm sure that a couple of years ago, this would have been a superb game. The sad thing is that it hasn't stood the test of time at all well. The graphics are garish and oversimplified, with small dots as characters on an otherwise unrecognisable map system. Complex menus are used when a simple screen would have sufficed and the scrolling could have been done in AMOS.

All that, plus the disgusting amounts of disk swapping involved, completely destroy what could have been an atmospheric and challenging game. All it needs is a little atmosphere and challenge and it would be an essential. [DU]

OVERALL 47%







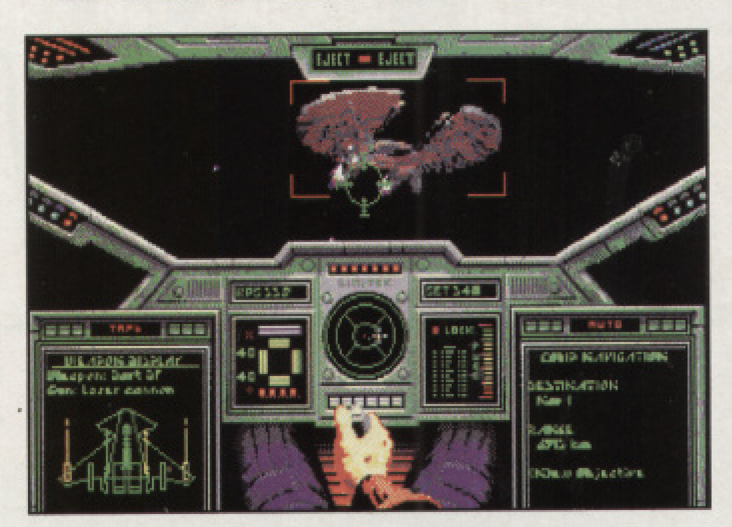


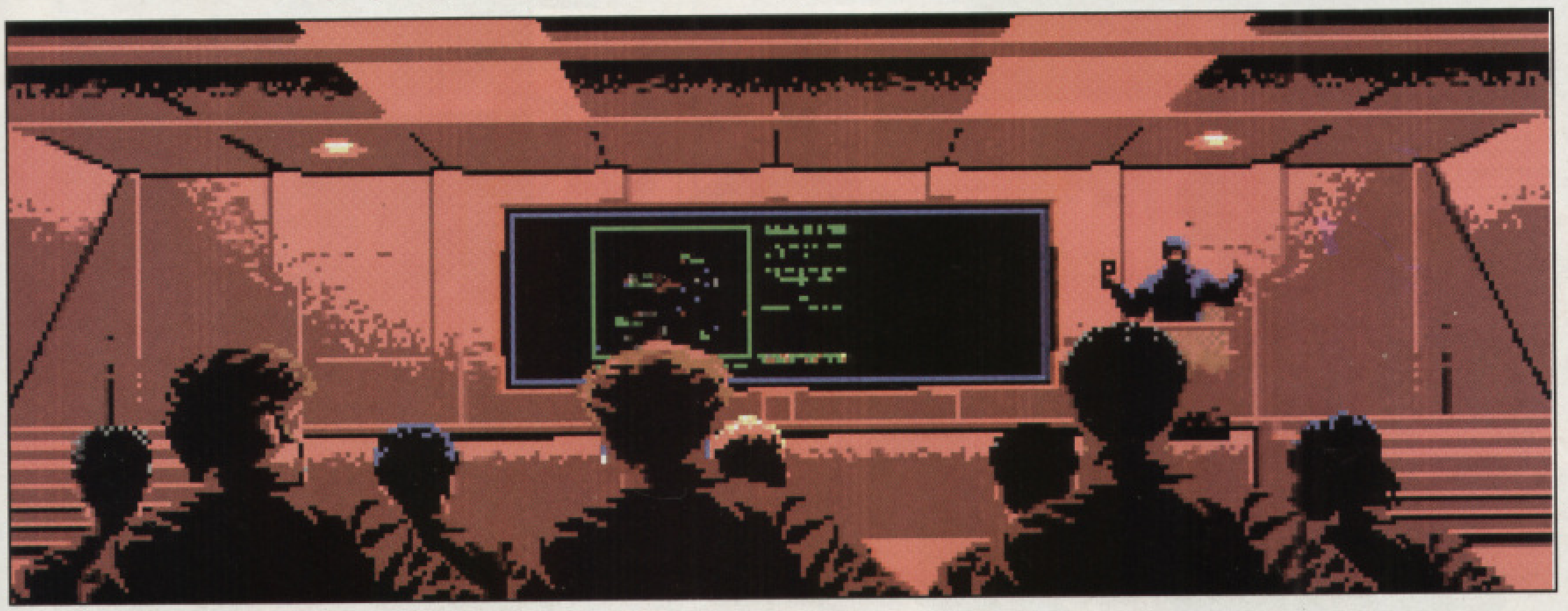
SPACE LEGENDS

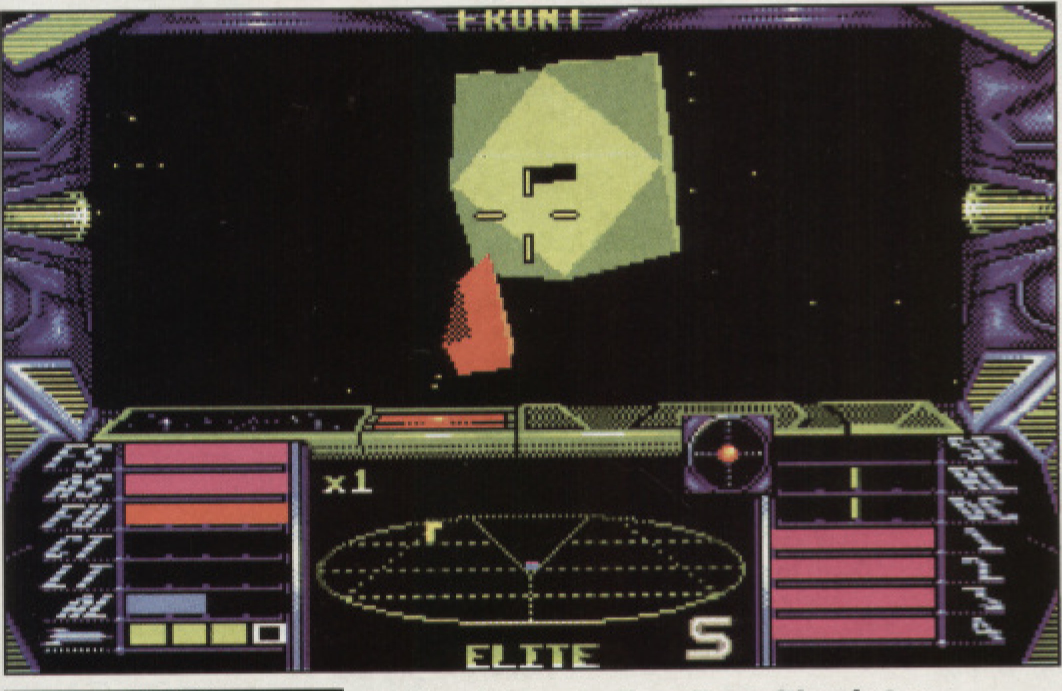
Empire £29.99

At first glance Space Legends looks like the ultimate compilation. Of course there's the usual duffer (MegaTraveller 1) but the other two games, Wing Commander and Elite, more than make up for it. Or do they? Well, we'll see...

Let's get the crap game out of the way first. MegaTraveller 1 is a drab space RPG type-thing based on the popular tabletop role-player. Apparently the nasty Zhodani are trying to start a war and you have to stop them with your small party of space adventurers.











The plot is actually quite exciting, but any narrative thrust is lost behind grotty presentation and low-grade graphics. On top of that the wandering about planets is tedious, the hand-to-hand combat laughable and the space battles play like Asteroids on Valium. Some saddies might enjoy this but I suspect for most of you MegaTraveller 1 will do nothing more than provide convenient saved game disks for the other two games in the pack...

...Which brings me to Wing Commander. Dave freaked out over this when it was released just a few short months ago but I have to admit to not being quite so impressed. Granted, it's an incredible technical achievement but the game's just too slow on a normal Amiga. On an A1200 it's a lot more fun even if, despite all the bells and whistles, it's just a simple 3D shoot-'em-up. Call me morbid, but the best part of the game is the space funeral you get when you die - the music is lovely.

Finally then, Elite. There can't be anyone who hasn't heard of this supreme classic. I first played this years and years ago on the C64 - oh, the hours I wasted trying to dock! Playing it again now I have to admit it has dated a little. The gameplay is very simplistic - just try to make as much cash as possible by ferrying cargo between worlds, occasionally engaging in 3D combat with space nasties - and docking is just as frustrating as it ever was.

Even so, there's something about Elite that makes is completely engrossing to play. Maybe it's the fact that you can either be a goody or a baddy depending on your personality? Or maybe it's the way you can slowly turn your ship from a sitting duck into a space dreadnought by buying add-ons for it? Or maybe it's the sheer size of the galaxy you can explore? I don't know but what I do know is that you can't say your software collection is complete without Elite in it.

The biggest pity about Space Legends, given the general overall quality of the games in the pack, is that its manual is a tatty, badly-designed affair. The reproduction of the original games' manuals is poor and the Amiga and PC loading instructions all jumbled together making them often very hard to follow. In the case of Elite all the Amiga owner gets is a couple of pages listing the controls - the actual playing instructions are for the PC game Elite Plus!

This - and the lamentable MegaTraveller 1 - aside, Space Legends is still an excellent buy for lovers of epic space adventure and combat, especially if they're lucky enough to have an A1200.

[SB]

OVERALL 83%

WIN! MORE STICKS!

It's incredible! There are fifty - yes, FIFTY! - joysticks up for grabs in this mega PowerPlay compo!

Joysticks, eh? Love 'em or loathe 'em, you can't live without 'em - especially if you're an Amiga games player. Thanks to the top geezers at PowerPlay, we're now offering fifty readers the chance to win one!

In case you don't know, PowerPlay are one of the UK's leading joystick manufacturers with a well-deserved reputation for reliability and quality. In fact their joysticks are so good that they're the ones we use here at the The One's office! Anyway, that's the crawly-bum-lick company promo blurb out of the way, on with a brief description of the goodies on offer...

✪ **TEN Zipstick Super Pros** - A sturdy little number this, boasting trendy black styling, bright yellow firebuttons and suckers so that you can weld the 'stick firmly onto your mum's dining table. Also has an autofire switch for those game that require real heavy-duty slaughter.

✪ **TEN Competition Pro 5000s** - One of the old faithfuls of the joystick world, this 'stick has been around since the days the Spectrum was king. Creaky old Dave says that this is his favourite 'stick of the lot, as if anybody's interested.

✪ **TEN Black Cruisers** - A sleek-looking, lightweight stick that works brilliantly whether held in the hand or suckered to the desktop. The variable tension control allows you to adjust the shaft's movement at will.

✪ **TEN Multi-Colour Cruisers** - Identical to the Black Cruiser in performance, this one comes in a variety of day-glo colours. This is Simon's favourite 'stick, because it matches his shirt.

✪ **TEN Turbo Cruisers** - Last but not least we come to this, a veritable king amongst joysticks. Sharing many of the same features of the other 'sticks in the Cruiser series, this also has a special 'Turbofire' button with which to lay waste hordes of aliens. Or something.

HOW TO WIN

Your appetite whetted we now get down to the nitty-gritty, i.e. how you actually win one. All you have to do is answer these three multiple-choice questions about the word 'joystick'. Inspired, eh?

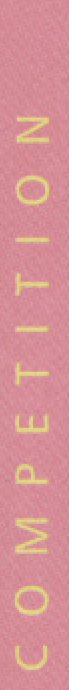
1 Complete this naff phrase: "Sticks and stones may break my bones but..."
(a) "...A bullet would probably kill me."
(b) "...Harsh words will never harm me."
(c) "...I could still give you a kicking."

2 During the Falklands War "Stick It Up Your Junta!" was a headline in which popular national newspaper?
(a) The Daily Telegraph.
(b) The Morning Star.
(c) The Sun.

3 'Joy' is a bit like 'Joi', which is the name of an indie pop band. What game did they recently produce the title track to?
(a) Street Fighter 2.
(b) Desert Strike.
(c) The Chaos Engine.

Once you've fathomed the answers to these difficult posers write the answers down on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope, not forgetting to add your name and address (some people do, you know!), and send it to: Oh What Joy! Compo, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

The closing date for the compo is 28th July 1993. The first fifty correct entries out of the bag after that date will win a joystick. The Editor's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into, all the usual The One competition rules apply, etc, etc.



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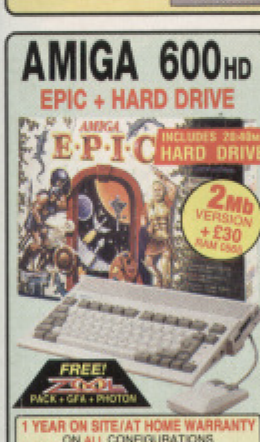
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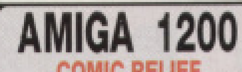
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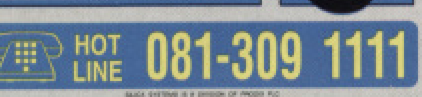
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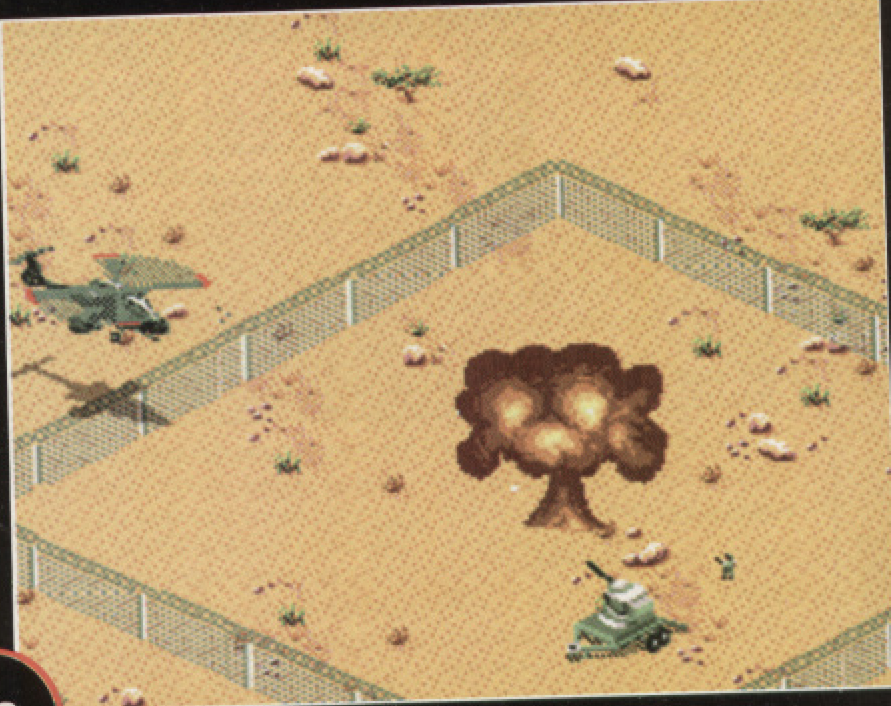
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KILL ZONE

Oh so you're back again, huh? Looking for top tips and complete solutions, yeah? Well, you've come to the right place. This month we have comprehensive playguides to the excellent Desert Strike and Arabian Nights, the start of complete solutions to Nippon Safes Inc. and Abandoned Places 2 (with maps and everything!), hints for Beavers and B-17 Flying Fortress as well as the usual Snip Tips round-up and, of course, Doctor David's Games Surgery. Eat your fill...

DESERT

None would deny that EA did a superb job of converting this excellent Megadrive game to the Amiga. Some would say they made it ever better. But nobody would say it was easy, so here's a run down of the entire game.



CAMPAIGN ONE

This one is already heavily documented in the manual and you should have no trouble at all working your way through it. Just in case you are, though, here are a few extra hints. Firstly, when attacking the power station, take out the pylons as well. They take a few hits, but once you have them down, you cripple the enemy even more!

There are two command centres to be taken out in the fourth mission of the campaign, but you only need to take out the southernmost one to complete the mission.

CAMPAIGN TWO

This one, again, has a fairly detailed guide in the manual. Here are some more of those useful tips. On the second mission, some of the buildings near the jails fire at you - you'll spot these from the flashes in the windows. Destroy these with your cannons carefully, and then collect all the MIA's hidden within.

On the fourth mission, a rock to the northwest of the chemical factory has an armed soldier prowling about next to it. Kill him without a moment's guilt and for good measure destroy the rock. Voilá - some free fuel!

On the sixth mission take out the watch towers with Hydras as quickly as possible. Once they've gone, take out everything else with Hellfires and then blow one of the huts. Collect the POWs and drop them off. Now return and repeat the process on another hut, but now you should be able to rely on your cannon.

On the top-right edge of the map you'll find a crashed F-15. The guy running around is the best co-pilot there is - Jake - and, when you destroy the plane after collecting him, you'll find an extra life!

CAMPAIGN THREE

This is one hell of a tough campaign and you'll need to draw on everything you've learnt so far. Here's a complete run down of the entire campaign.

On mission one enter the main city from the south-west and fire off a couple of Hydras to destroy the two APHIDs that are attacking the UN troops. Collect the troops and have a ball blowing up every small building in sight. Now pick up all the friendly troops running around and drop them off at the nearest point.

During mission two you'll find a tanker on the western edge of the chemical factories. Take out the AAA first and foremost and then turn and take out the factories themselves. Pick up the scientists and pop off home for a quick cup of tea.

The third mission has you attacking

some silos, and most of them are surrounded by sand dunes which contain vital supplies. The silo to the east is located right next to an extra life, but you'll need to have a Hydra ready to deal with the APHID. To destroy the silos give them 17 cannon rounds and then five missiles. Now sweep the area picking out everything else with your cannons.

The boats are a lot tougher than they look on mission four. Fly toward them and pass over them, letting off six Hydras as you do (you'll need to do this once for each boat). If that isn't enough to sink them then I don't know what is. Remember to collect the pilots afterward.

The fifth mission is similar to the one in the first campaign. Take out the power station, and then systematically wipe out the pylons as you come to them.

should find plenty of refuel icons in buildings previously destroyed. Wipe out everything and land on the large 'X'. Take off again and wipe out all the replenished defences. When everyone has climbed into the bus, shoot the gate with your cannons. Now fly slightly ahead of the bus, blowing out everything that moves. Don't forget to pick up your co-pilot at the end!

CAMPAIGN FOUR

The final mission is the hardest yet and you'll notice that we don't provide any tips for the second and third missions. That's because they're straightforward enough. All you need to bear in mind is that supplies in this campaign are limited. Although it might look like you have a lot to begin with, try to avoid using the resources until it's completely necessary, as there is barely enough to cover the campaign.



STRIKE

The sixth mission takes a little planning. Attack from the north, using two Hellfires on the helicopter and a Hydra on the motorboats. The troops can be dealt with using your cannon - far more satisfactory. Now fly around to the right of the yacht and let fly with your cannon. Collect the six hostages one at a time but don't pay too much attention to the mad man escaping.

Mission seven has you attacking the command centre. Fly to the radar site south of the centre and wipe it all out. Now return to the command centre and destroy everything you find there. If that isn't enough, then run around your house destroying everything in sight. Return to the game and collect the guy waving the white flag outside the centre. Now wipe out anything still standing, just for the hell of it.

Finally we reach mission eight. Fly into the city from the west, where you find the sites just south of the factory and north-east of the nearby landing zone respectively.

On the first mission, you'll find the commandos north of the coast. Just fly east from the carrier and then turn through 90° at the water's edge and keep on going. When you have to attack the oil fields watch out for the three ZSUs that guard each one. Take out the top and bottom ones first, and then carefully shoot the middle one. Try not to hit any of the drums.

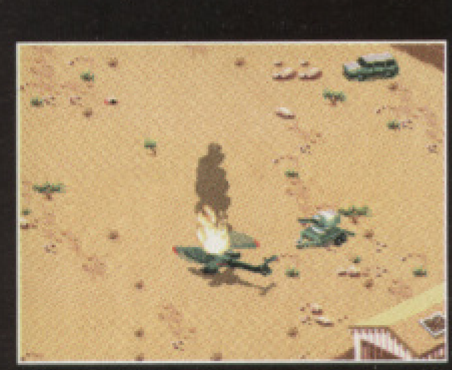
In mission four, the dump trucks can be found in the city at the bottom of the map. Come in low, taking out all the defences, then the dump trucks and then all the small buildings. With any luck you'll find a couple of extra lives in there too!

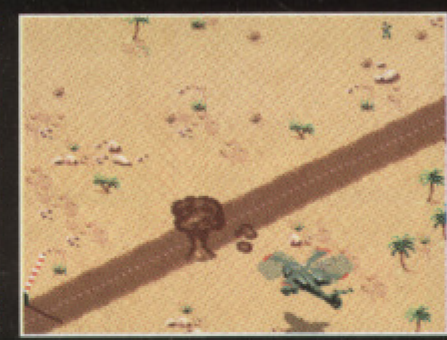
When tackling the fifth mission of this campaign note that the radar sites have to be destroyed first. If you don't you'll have bogeys all over you in no time and there's nothing quite so horrible as being covered in bogeys. You'll find the sites just south of the factory and north-east of the nearby landing zone respectively.

I don't know how many times you need to be told but, when wiping out the power station on Mission six, take out the pylons too!

When you go for the Palace in mission seven, take out all the buildings nearby once you're dealt with the defences. In one you'll find an extra life. When you've reduced the Palace to a pile of rubble, land on the pad.

Finally, we come to mission eight of the last campaign, and congratulations to all of you who get this far without cheating. Stock up on everything and fly towards the bomber along that long road that cuts through the map. Get in close to it and just let everything at it. As soon as you run out, you should be able to restock, if you remembered to leave the ammo alone. Now you should finish it in no time. Don't you feel proud? You've made the world safe again for decent folk!





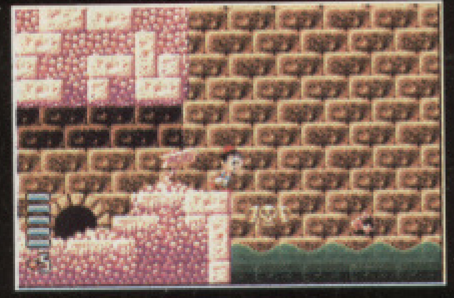


ARABIAN NIGHTS

Is Krisalis swashbuckling adventure just too much for you? Here's the complete solution - and it's guaranteed to make your toes really curl!







LEVEL 1: THE DUNGEON

There are only a few puzzles to solve on this level, as you would expect. The first thing you'll need to do is find a replacement crank handle for the wheel holding the prisoner to the wall. A few screens above the prisoner you'll find a snake charmer who offers you his snake for fifty gems. So, race around the level collecting the gems and then return. He'll give you a fully stiffened snake, perfect for use as a winding mechanism!

To get through the Magic Pot maze, you'll need the Maze Djinni, which is found in the guard's room. If you don't want to risk taking on the guard, then follow this solution to get through the maze. Go through the pot on the right, then the second one from the right, and finally the second on the left. If you have the Maze Djinni, these pots will be marked with an arrow. There lie your only two puzzles.

However, this level does have a lot more than just puzzles to it. There are loads of secret rooms to be found - and secret rooms mean a larger bonus at the end. A few of the rooms are hidden in the drainage holes on the backdrop - pull down in front of them and tap the Fire button - as well as through more obvious locations such as the doors. In the room with the prisoner, run to the right-hand wall and hack at the stones at the top of the stairs - this will let you into a room full of gems. This will make a much easier job of collecting the cash for the snake!

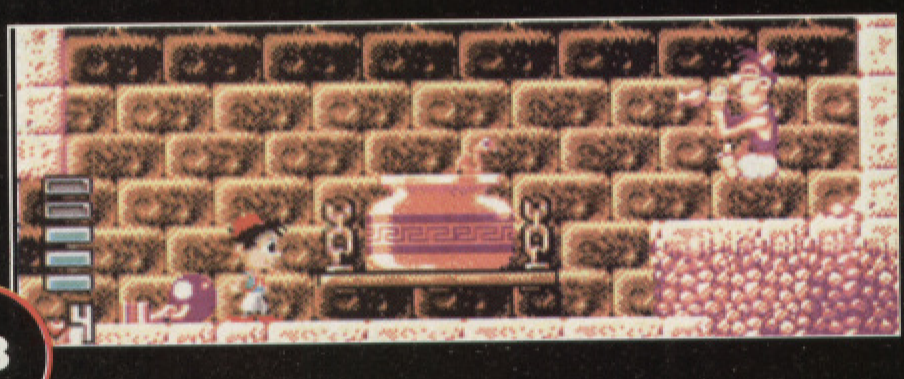
LEVEL 2: THE FOREST

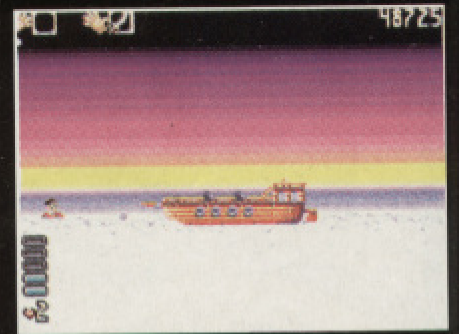
This level also has its fair share of secret rooms and bonus areas. Some of them are hidden in the trees themselves. For example, from the start, walk right up the hill until you reach the second tree. Jump as high as you can to the left and you'll find yourself standing in the branches. Walk left and you'll find a bunch of coins. Other secret areas are found in the tree stumps themselves. Stand on top of them and pull down while tapping fire to get some more points and gems.

Talk to the bear and he'll start crying. Walk all the way past - jump over the collapsing bridges and pay the turtle to dig the path for you. Follow him and you'll find yourself at three wells. Go into the one on the left and the granny you'll meet will give you thimble. Go all the way back to the bear and collect the tears in the thimble.

Note: The tears always fall on the opposite side to you, so stand on the left and when he cries, run quickly to the right. When the thimble is full, go to the thirsty plant and water it. It'll grow, and you can climb on it to get the spool of thread. Take this to the granny, and take the carpet when she explodes.

Climb into the box in the treetops and then the one you find underground. Now you are ready to face the rock guardian. To kill him you have to hit the rocks he throws back at him, as your sword will have no effect on him at all. The easiest way to do this is to leap towards him and swing your



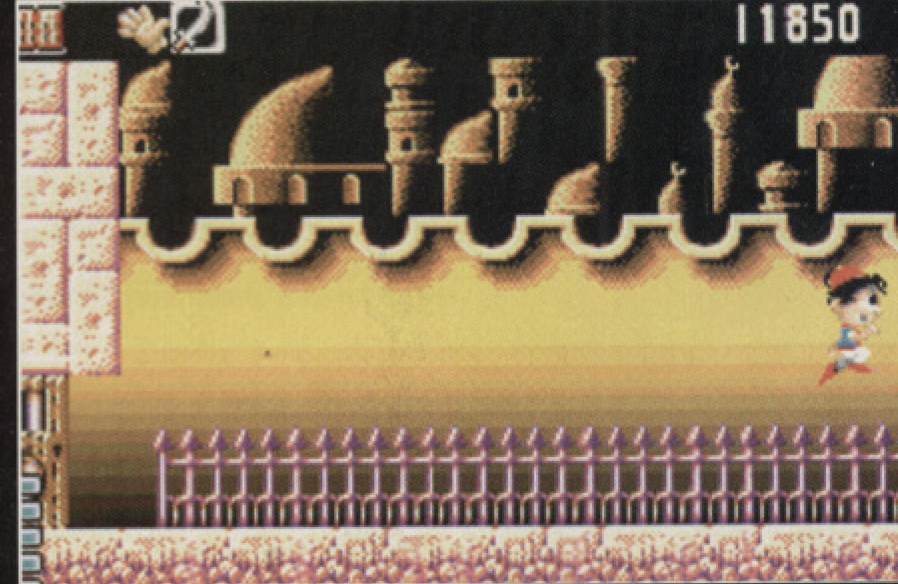












sword as soon as he leans out of the holes, hitting the boulders while he is still holding them.

LEVEL 3: FLYING LEVEL

This is quite a simple shoot-'em-up, with one or two things to watch out for. Firstly, the Arab Copters are the only things that track you. The balloon bombers and the Arrow Men travel from right to left across the screen and are easy enough to avoid. The Arab Copters will continue to swing around you until you hit them or they hit you, so take them out as quickly as possible.

Watch out for the sheep that launch at you. You can tell when one is about fly by the loud bleating sound. Remember that they come down as well as go up, so either fly at the top of the screen when they leap or stick to the left of the screen.

The only other thing to watch out for are the Galleons that aim at you as you fly over. There only two things you can do with these - either shoot out the guns as they appear on the screen or, if you are low on energy, fly under them as they pass across the screen.

LEVEL 4: THE GALLEON

This is a very large level, with quite an intricate map. There are, however, two main and distinct routes through the ship - the first offers you more points but the second is an easier route. Both routes begin when you reach the first quadipus (an octopus with only four legs) and I'll begin with the more profitable route.

(1) When you go down the first flight of stairs, where you'll find the first set of eels, you'll see a false wall on the right. Go through this and collect the fish bones. Now press the buttons to set the large columns moving. Now walk through them and find the large cooking pot. Enter this by pulling down and pressing fire. This will magically transport you to a rather difficult area.

In front of you is a small platform. When you climb onto it, it will start moving through the large room of spikes. A word of warning - the platform DOES NOT CARRY YOU. You need to walk with it to keep up and the platform moves in all directions, so be careful. A lot of the time you can guess where the platform will go thanks to the positioning of the spikes.

Before long you will reach a long strip where spikes line the floor. The spikes in the middle are fake, so jump off the platform and fall through them to reach a magic pot. Don't try and collect the fish bones here as they are surrounded by traps. Just climb into the pot and you'll be magically transported to the point where both routes meet. Go to section three of this level to find out more.

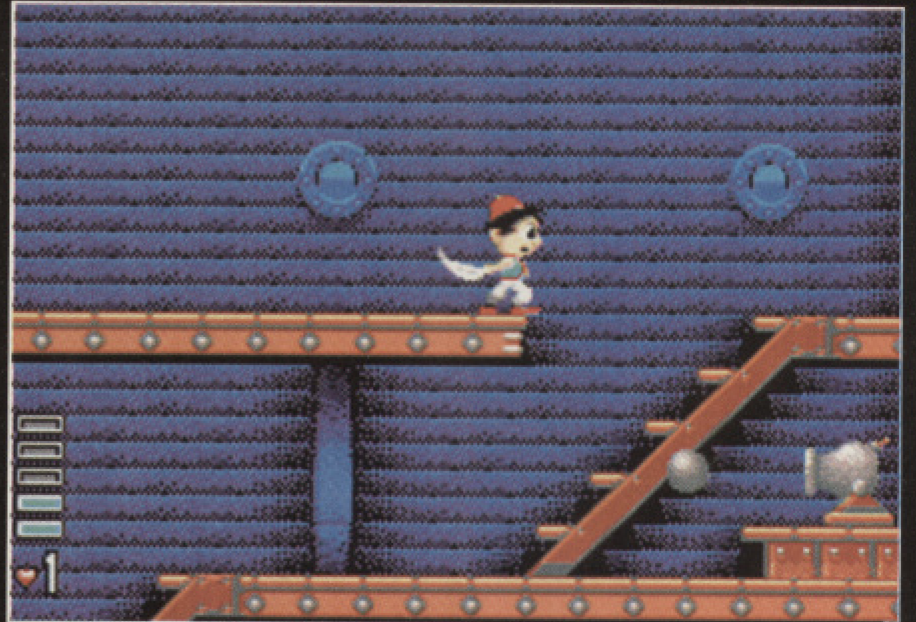


(2) This is the easy route, for all you cowards out there. Jump past the quadipus, watching out for the cannon. You'll see another two cannons, so wait until the coast is clear before moving. When you reach the ropes with the eels moving up and down, wait until they are at the very top or the very bottom of the ropes before making your move. Once past these you'll come to a pot. This will teleport you to the room where both routes meet but watch out for the cannon that fires at you as soon as you materialise. Get past it and go to just above and the left of it to collect an extra life. Now both routes meet.

(3) Hit the first button you find and avoid the bomb that explodes. The second button can be found in the top-left corner of the room and moves the column out of the way. The two doors revealed both lead to the same location but the second is a much harder route. However, it does earn you more cash, so the risk is completely yours.

Now all you need to do is find the five fish for the crab cook. Behind each of the five doors is a quadipus which will drop a fish when killed, so just work through all five doors. With your five fish, go back to the Crab Cook and he will help you escape. In this final room, get on the small moving platform, flick the switches to raise the column and then drop down the left hand side onto the giant plug, and you've done the level!





LEVEL 5: THE DEEP

The pipes on this level turn the whole area into a maze. Most of them are one-way, remember, so search every location fully before stepping into one. Enter the first pipe you find, and then follow the path up and round to the left. You'll find the diving boots here, which will come in very handy later in the level.

You'll find two pipes here - the bottom leads to a couple of bonus rooms and the top one leads to a ball and chain. Get past the ball and carry on to the right, entering the pipe you find there. Now you'll come across a group of six pipes, When you enter one, you will shoot out of another one and start cannoning from pipe to pipe, eventually shooting out into completely the wrong area. Walk back into the pipe you just left at this point to get back on the right track.

Continue to the right, avoiding the ball and chain, the undersea enemies and the skull. Take no notice of the chest hidden in the hole - it's a trap. Now is the time to use the diving boots as this next set of spikes is a little tricky without them. After the spikes head for the pipes through the rock maze to get through quickly, but there are plenty of bonus points to be had. Now all you need to do is defeat the water elemental and you're on to Level 6!

LEVEL 6: THE MINE CART RACE

This is a level with no secret rooms and no secret tricks. Just get from start to finish as quickly as you can. You don't need to finish the race in your cart, but you'll get through a lot quicker if you're in one!

As the secret is speed, here's a couple of pointers on how to shave off those vital seconds. When cornering, cut the bends by slowing down near the turn. The cart will drop, saving you from hitting the bumpers and bouncing down the next ramp. If you should slow down going up a ramp, bounce the cart up the ramp rather than trying another run - it's a lot faster this way.

There's a major short cut to take later on in the race. On your way down, you pass two walls of ice. As you approach the second, you'll see a small gap with an arrow just past it. Hop over the gap avoiding the magnet and you'll skip a large part of the race! To gain a secret bonus, finish the race without wheels on your cart.

Finally, somewhere on the level you'll find a key which speeds up your cart no end. Find this and victory is yours!





LEVEL 7: DIAMOND MINES

Right at the start you find a section where you leap between conveyor belts. Here you'll find a large hole. Ignore it as it merely leads to a large spike pit. Just past this you'll arrive at a long tunnel leading upwards. Instead of heading to the right hack away at a couple of the ice blocks that line the vertical tunnel and climb up.

After this you'll see two buzz saws which can cause some problems. There are two secret rooms to be found here but be very careful indeed. Stand on the top of the slopes on the small hills and fall through the platforms using down and Fire together to get into the rooms. The next secret room to be found is on the edge of the cliff with the guard. To get into it, stand on the edge of the cliff and fall through the platform.

Finally, just past the danger sign, is the tunnel leading to the fire elemental. There's a secret room hidden in the spikes on the left of the tunnel. As you fall pull left to enter the room but watch out for the real spikes. To kill the fire elemental you need to turn on the taps using the valves, each of which takes a few hits to open. Try and set them up so that each can be turned on with one hit when the elemental is directly beneath them.





LEVEL 8: THE APPROACH

This section is much the same as Level 3, but there are a lot more enemies filling the sky, so keep moving! At the end of the level, you'll meet the fourth guardian - the Flying Demon. He carries a magic orb which is his only weak spot. He carries out three different attacks, one after another, and the sooner you learn them, the easier it is to beat him.

The first is a swoop, in which he swings around you in a clockwise move. To avoid him stay in the centre of the screen. After the swoop he shoots three magic bolts at you from the Orb. To avoid these move to the left of the screen, giving you more time to move up or down out of the way. Finally he will swoop straight at you. Wait until he gets close and then move out of the way. If you move too quickly he'll change direction to meet you. Keep attacking him through all three attacks and he'll fall like a stone in no time.

LEVEL 9: THE ICE FORTRESS

There are a variety of items you need to collect for this level. The first thing you need are the crampons, to stop you sliding all over the place every time you move. Right at the start of the level you'll come across some doors which have frozen up, and you'll need to find a blowtorch to open each one. You'll find the first one to the left of the lift.

Go through the first door and you'll see a bomb in the next room. Wait until it explodes, then go through the wall where it was to collect an extra life. Carry on through to the right and you'll see a room with some chandeliers. Take the crampons and the blowtorch and open the second door. Go up in the lift, and go through the first door you find, which leads to a room with the projectile sword in it, needed for later on.

The next room contains bonus points only and the third leads to the next blowtorch. Get this but don't take the speed up bonus, as this makes the room too difficult to play. Now leave and go through the final door.

In this room are four holes that take four separate routes to the final challenge. The fourth one is the easiest and the most fun, but you can take any of the four you wish. Work your way through the rooms and you face the Evil Vizier himself. He has control over the four elements, and uses them in this order: Wind, Water, Earth and Fire. Here's how to beat each element.

Wind: The Vizier appears on one side of the room and spikes appear on the other. He will now try to blow you onto the spikes. All you need to do is repeatedly jump towards him attacking all the time. Get enough hits in, and he will change into...

Water: Spinning bubbles shoot across the screen. Avoid these and attack the Vizier. Then spikes will grow out of the roof and bubbles will rise from the bottom of the screen. After this, attack the Vizier again.

Earth: Blocks will fly from the walls in direct line with you, so keep jumping to avoid them. Attack the Vizier as he stands in the middle of the screen. After a while the blocks will fall from the roof.

Fire: The Vizier will stand in the middle of the screen surrounded by spikes while he launches fire at you. Avoid the fire for long enough and the spikes will disappear, allowing you to rush in and hack away. Destroy him now and the ground will open up and swallow him. That's all there is to it!

NIPPON SAFES INC.

DONNA FATALE

Once you leave the prison, wiggle your hips for a moment and go right along the highway. Find the road sign and take it and head back to the prison. Continue walking left until you reach the abandoned kiosk. Search the kiosk and take the mustard you find there. Walk right for one screen and hitchhike with the sign. An attractive brunette like you will have no trouble at all stopping the traffic. When a car stops, get in and the driver will take you into town.

When he drops you off outside the city, walk right, down through the town square and then right again until you reach the 'Hot Sushi' bar. Go in to your old haunt and speak to the guy sat on his own in the cubicle on the right. Once you've had your conversation, walk over to Max and Kos at the bottom of the screen and chat to them. Take the money they offer you for hot dogs and leave the club. Now go left across two screens.

Go to the front of the Emperor's residence and examine the 'Help Wanted' sign. Use the intercom and chat to the woman who answers. When she tells you to go, go left into the park and find the hot dog vendor. Buy two without mustard and return to the 'Hot Sushi'. Give the hot dogs to Max and Kos, who'll give them back complaining about the lack of mustard. Use the mustard on them and return them. Take the money and leave the club, go up and talk to the geisha girl who keeps passing and then buy a ticket to Kinza from the newsstand. Go back to the screen with the 'Hot Sushi' entrance and enter the subway. Once there, use the ticket on the machine and get on the train to Kinza.

When you arrive, talk to the geisha girl once more and then read the sign outside the boxing arena.

Dino Fagioli will appear, so go and talk to him. When he agrees to your demands, go back on the tube and head for Doug's house. Pick up the empty perfume bottle in the rubbish in the alleyway and then take it to the fountain in the park. Fill the bottle from the fountain and go to the warehouses to complain about your perfume. You'll be given some money to keep you quiet. With this money, go to the newsstand and read the sports magazine to find out where the Sumo wrestler is staying. Now buy a ticket and get on the tube. From here on, you're on your own!



DOUG NUTS

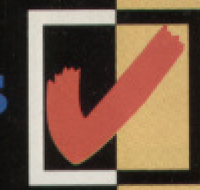
When this bespectacled boffin leaves the prison, walk left and examine the second waste-paper basket you find. Take the token you find and go back right, past the prison until you come to a phone box. Use the token on the phone to call a taxi. When the cab arrives, climb in and talk to the driver. Examine the pendant in the cab and then talk to the driver again.

When the cab stops, get out and enter the 'Hot Sushi'. Talk to Doctor Ki (he's the one sat on his own on the right) and then to Max and Kos. Offer them a beer and then leave the club. Go up and enter the alley.

Go into your house using your key, open the safe and take out your monkey wrench (don't ask me why he'd want to keep a monkey wrench in a safe). Open the pantry and use the wrench on the radio you find there to get a magnet. Get the remote control and use it on the TV.

Once your TV watching is over leave the house remembering to empty the letterbox on the way. Go out of the alleyway and head for the museum. Talk to the taxi driver and then walk to the newsstand. Go back to the museum straight away and take six leaflets from the distributor. Use your wrench on the parking meter to get some money and go back to the newsstand. Buy a ticket for Kinza and get on the tube opposite the 'Hot Sushi'. Speak to Dino Fagioli when you get there, go back into the subway and examine the sign you see there.

Go back to the entrance of the



So, come on then. What are you: smart, sexy or stupid? Whichever you are, if you've had any trouble with this superb graphic adventure from DMI, then here's a little helping hand to get you started...





'Hot Sushi' and swap the monkey wrench for the large pot from Chan The Honest One. Go left to the park and then find the two pinks. Give them the red leaflet and they'll drop a magazine. Take it and deliver it to the news vendor, who'll give you some money in return. Buy a ticket for Subu and get on the tube. Once in Subu, go into the Pachinko. Examine the money machine and you'll find a ball. Play the game with the ball and use the magnet on it when it falls. This will leave you sufficiently rich. Get the pot of balls and exchange them for cigars.

Go back on the subway and exchange the pot for the wrench at Chan's. From here, all you... No, I think I've told you enough.

DINO FAGIOLI

Dino's freedom begins, not outside the prison gates as with the other two, but with an offer of a job at the local museum. When you take over from the film sequences, Dino has just been left alone in the museum. With no time to waste, you must first move the fire extinguisher and the panel hidden behind it.

This reveals four switches with lights. Flick the switches so the they are all on with the exception of the top-right one. The door at the top of the stairs will open.

Go through into the strong room, and take the second and fourth boxes from the left. Use the two objects you find inside on each other, eat the special beans you create and you'll become super strong. Take the Mona Lisa and the thermometer from the wall and open the first box on the right. Break the ice with your special fist and take out the lighter. Use the lighter on the Mona Lisa and hold the burning picture close to the fire detector on the ceiling.

After being rescued from the strong room, go down and rearrange the statues in ascending order from right to left. You'll be taken outside, and after the conversation, go down a screen and immediately back up. Talk to the taxi driver, go down two screens to the 'Hot Sushi', walk left to the Imperial residence, then down to the fountain. Examine the fountain and take the coin you find there.

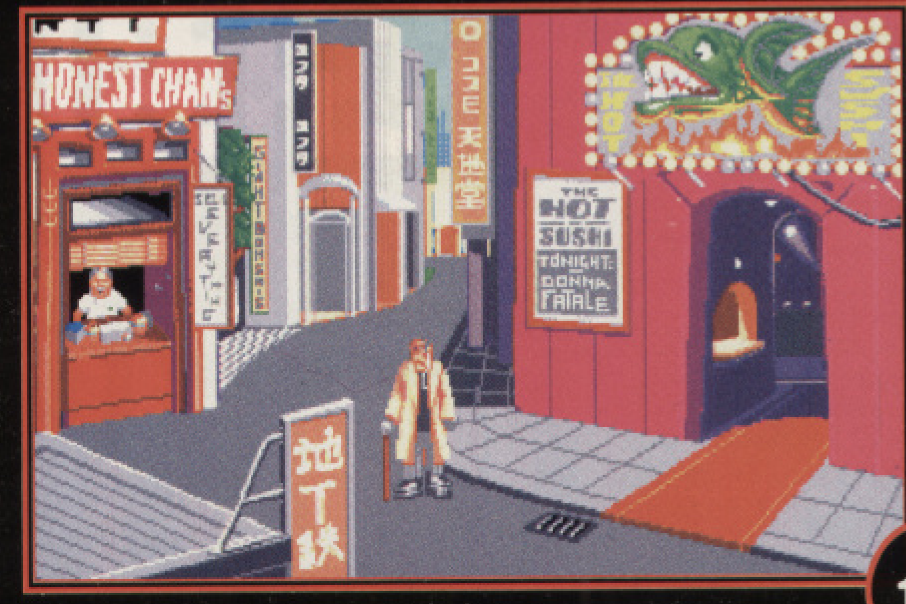
Walk back to the newsstand and buy yourself a ticket to Kinza. Before you get the train from outside the 'Hot Sushi', exchange your useless burnt-out lighter for a spanking new wrench from Chan's. Now get on the tube to Kinza.

When you leave the train, go in to the tower opposite the station and open the door. When you pull the handle off, use the wrench. Go to the top of the stairs and talk to the suicidal person. Take the hat from the ground and the parcel (examine this twice). Leave the tower and talk to Donna Fatale. She'll talk you into going in for the Sumo match. So, go into the ring and talk to the Sumo wrestler.

Go back on the subway and beg with the hat next to the newsstand. Enter the password and then buy a ticket. Before you go back to the subway, go to outside the museum and take the six leaflets you find there. Go to the restaurant behind the park and hand over the leaflet with the invitation to the tasting. Eat the beans to get your special strength, which will let you open the door at the Sumo wrestlers. From here on in, you're on your own kid.

IS THAT ALL?

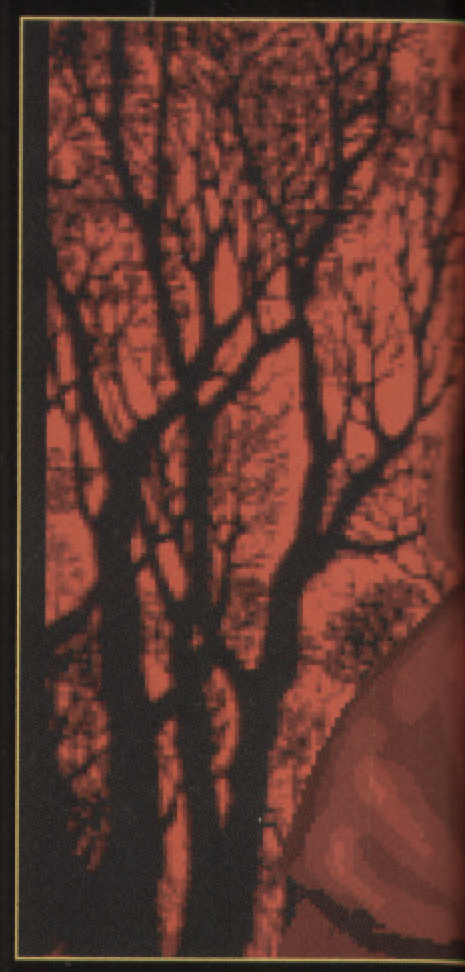
Don't worry, we're not going to leave you totally in the lurch - the rest of the solution will appear in the near future!



ABANDONE

Described as being far better than its predecessor, Abandoned Places 2 has been causing all manner of problems. Here's ICE with the solution to the first ten levels.





YOUR GUIDE

If you've had any problems at all with the mighty Abandoned Places 2, then you've come to the right place. Just look up the level of your choice and find out where you're going wrong. If, however, you're a complete wimp, and a sad one at that, you could just follow the solution through from start to finish. Before you start rubbing your hands with glee, though, there are a couple of things to make note of.

Firstly, all references to the maps work on a coordinates system working from the top-left corner of the map (0,0). So, as in the first level, the co-ordinates (26,26) refer to the square 26 squares east and 26 squares south of the top left corner.

Also, the most important items only are marked on the maps. As you travel through the game, you'll find stacks of other useful items, which are also worth collecting, but ensure that you collect the ones shown.

Right, that's that out of the way. Let's get on down there!

LEVEL 1

From your starting position at (9,15), make your way through the maze to S2, found at map co-ordinates (29,26). Flick the switch, and it'll open the door at position SA2, located at (26,26). Go and find the key at (30,27) and head for the stairs at (26,30). Due to some unusual architecture, you'll find yourself re-emerging on the staircase at (16,10).

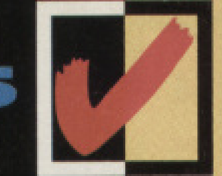


Place all the items you don't need on the switch marked S3 at (22,9) to open the wall at SA3 (26,10). Go through the wall to 2 at (30,18) using your key and you're on your way to the next dungeon!

LEVEL 2

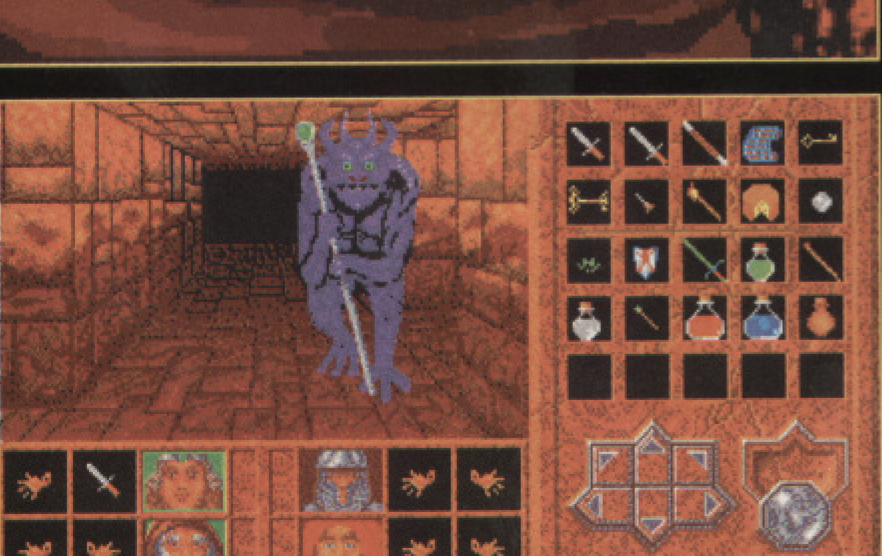
Starting at (12,14), walk north to the switch S1 at (9,9) to open the wall next to it. Find the two keys marked on the map as 'K's. Note: They are carried by monsters which walk around so the positions are approximate. Use the switch S2 at (9,2) to open the door at (6,2). To get to the first key (3,11) you need to use the switch at (2,7) to remove the pillar at (1,10).

With your two keys, make your way back to the starting position and open the doors at (6,14) and (7,14) with them. Collect the elixir from the chest at (2,13). Now all you need to do to finish this quest is go back to the starting place on the first level and you will be met. The elixir will be taken from you and the door to the outside world at (16,30) will be opened!



D PLACES 2

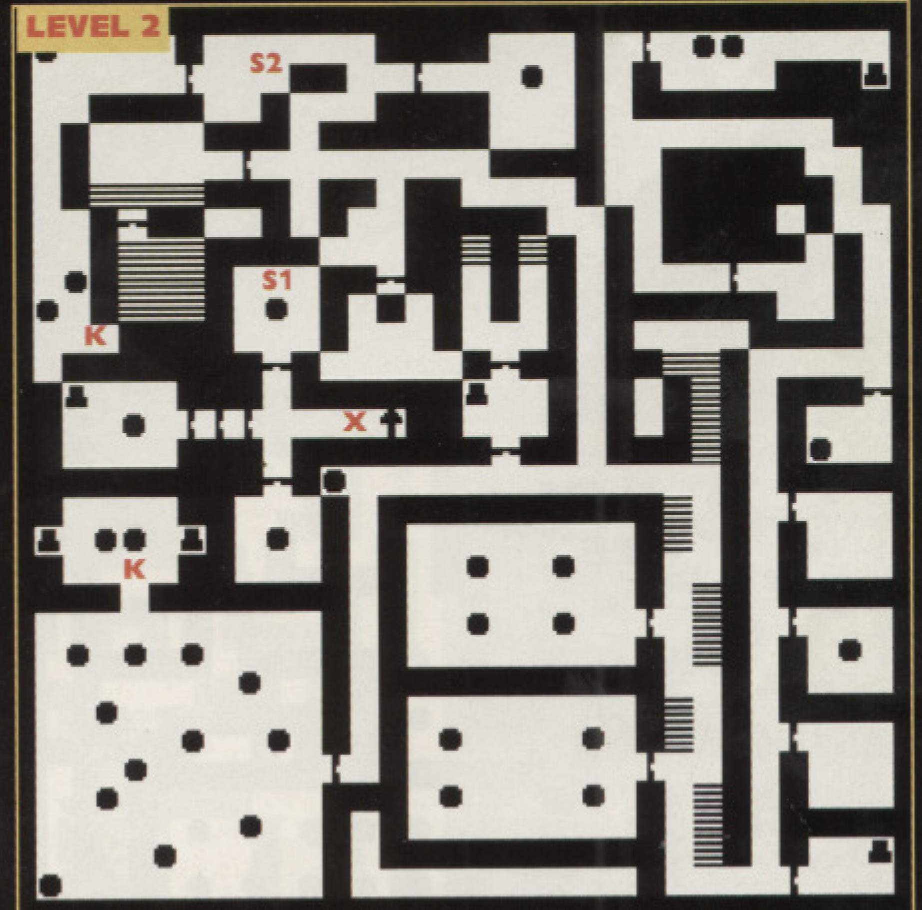






KEY

▲	Chest
■	Wall
≡	Fire
●	Object
[	Door
x	Start



DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 1

From the beginning, work your way around the top of the maze until you reach the trap at T1 (8,9) and use a levitate spell to cross it. Travel anti-clockwise around the room and press the S1 switch (1,16) which will remove the object at SA1 (23,8). Venture down as far as switch S2, which can be conveniently contacted at (7,11), and use it to remove a wall which, as it would happen, allows you to enter the chest room. Go off on your merry way to the trap at T2 which will teleport you to TD2 (17,6). Now all you need to do is trot down the stairs to the second level.

DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 2

An unusual level this one as it seems to comprise almost exclusively of one large room. Travel eastward





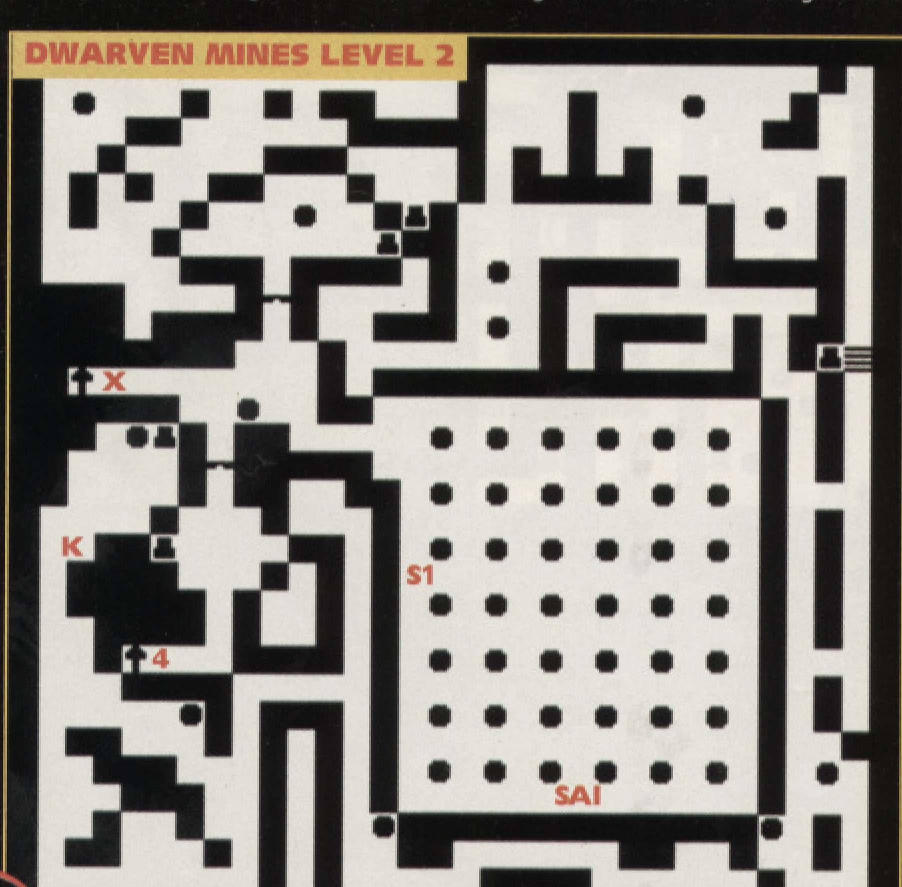


until you reach it, but watch your step carefully. This room is riddled with switches. The one you want is the only one marked on the map, S1 (14,19), which when triggered will open the door at (20,28), paving the way to a whole new area.

In this area, skip along to (2,19) and get the key from the monster. Feel free to use your initiative at this point. Got the key? Good. Now get back to (6,16) and open the door. This lets you into a small corridor with some stairs just around the corner. Venture forth, brave one!

DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 3

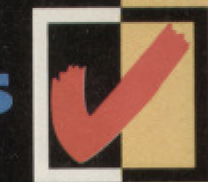
This is a surprisingly straightforward level, in that it has no switches and no traps. Here's all you have to do. Travel through the maze, collecting all the keys marked with a 'K' (marked on the map, not in the game), and use them to open all the locked doors on the level. There are two ways down from this level, one at (5,5) and the other at (15,28). You can go either way, as they both lead down to Level 4.



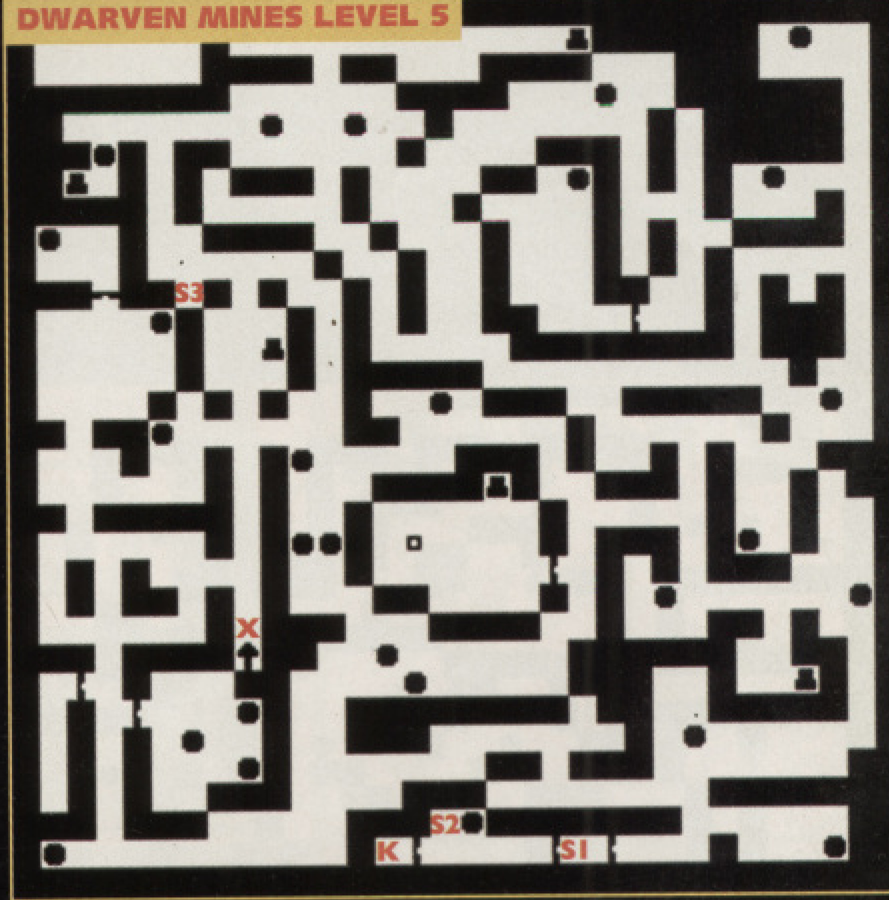


DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 4

A bit of a tricky one this, so I'll explain firstly what the objective is. You need to collect four longswords and place them in the correct positions on the level to even stand a chance of getting







DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 5



through. The swords are marked on the map with 'L's, but some are carried by monsters, so you might need to scrabble around in places.

Jump down (or to put it more bluntly, fall down) the pit at (6,12) which, due to this game's quirky design, will drop you at (12,28). Here you will find a key and a sword. Go back up through the pit using a levitate spell.

The other essential key you need can be found in the room to the northeast. Open the door at (27,30) with the bronze key and enter the square room. Now comes the tricky bit. A longsword has to be placed in each of the following positions: (21,24), (22,24), (23,24) and (23,23).

The passage to the west will now open up, giving you the chance to use that ivory key you found earlier (remember?) to open the locked door and shoot off to Level 5 with plenty of time for fun and japes.



DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 4

DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 5

A large, but simple level. Simple that is, if you know the order to perform your actions. Do you really want to know? Oh, all right then, Use the S1 switch at (20,20) which will open the wall at (16,29). Then use the S2 switch at location (25,29) which will open the big door allowing you to get the key at (23,30).

Take the key, and use it to open the door ar (19,20), giving you all the room you need to take a flying leap into a large pit. Why would you want to jump into a pit? To get down to Level 6, of course!

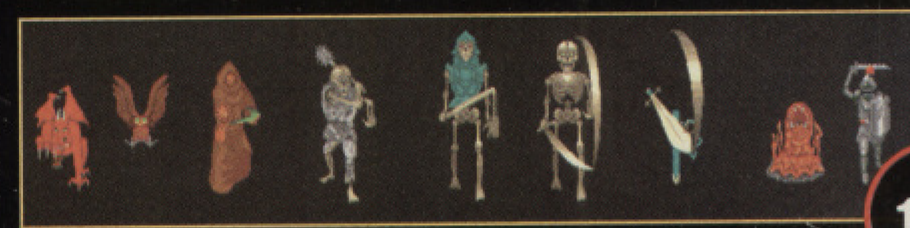
DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 6

From the start up in the northwest corner of this level get the key at (1,30). Use the S1 switch at (9,30) to get rid of the pillar and walk onwards to the trap at T1 (7,26). This teleports you to the fire room, found at (22,17). Leave the fire room and find the key at (26,16). This key is held by a monster, so give him hell.

With your new found treasure, open the chest at (22,10) and take out the magic stone you find within. Go to (17,10) and travel round the room in an anti-clockwise direction until you reach (17,12). This route opens up a wall at (12,10), and you can get back through the gap to the two doors at (10,22). Open the first one with the ivory key and the second with the magic stone, and down the stairs you go again. Oh, for a Stannah chairlift!

DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 7

From your humble beginnings, head west and then north to (6,14) where you'll find a monster hiding behind a pillar. To remove the pillar, use a switch you find in one of the rooms on the west side of the map. Kill the monster and take the medium Silver key it was carrying. Now travel back to S1 at

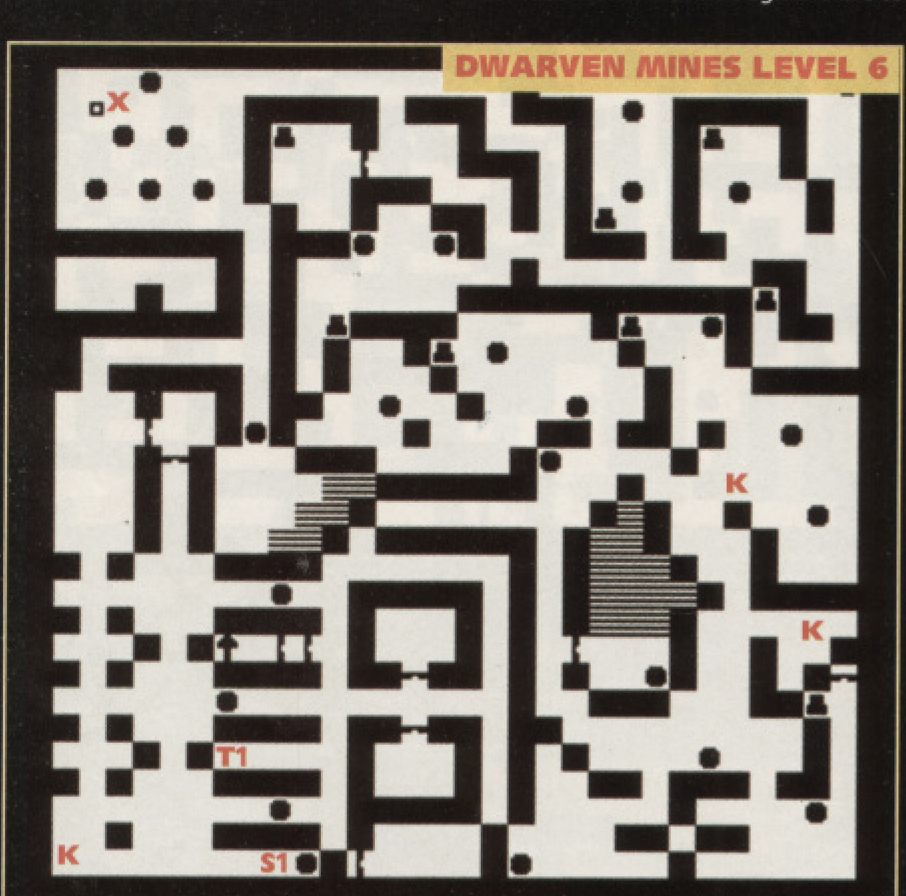


(23,30) to open the mysterious wall at (29,30).

Now travel north and then east until you reach S2 (19,5). Use the switch and a wall at (18,15) will mysteriously disappear. Get through the wall to S3, and use it to let you through to S4, which in turn will unlock the door at (2,30). Now use the medium Silver key to open the door at (1,30). Tumble gaily down the stairs and face Level 8.

DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 8

Yes, this map does look a bit of a mess, doesn't it? We're not quite sure whether we were sent this one, or if it's an example of what the airbrush tool in Deluxe Paint looks like close up. But still, it does make for a very straight forward level. We should just let you work it out for yourselves, but we're such kind souls that we've decided to let you in on the secret. Get through the fire to T1 (11,14) which transports you, Alice In Wonderland style, to TD1 (22,1). From here, move to (2,19) and drop a torch in the fire next to you. A wall in front of you will open up, and you can toddle down yet another level. We're not going to fast for you, are we?





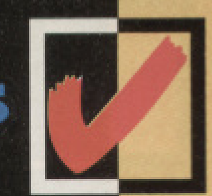
DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 9

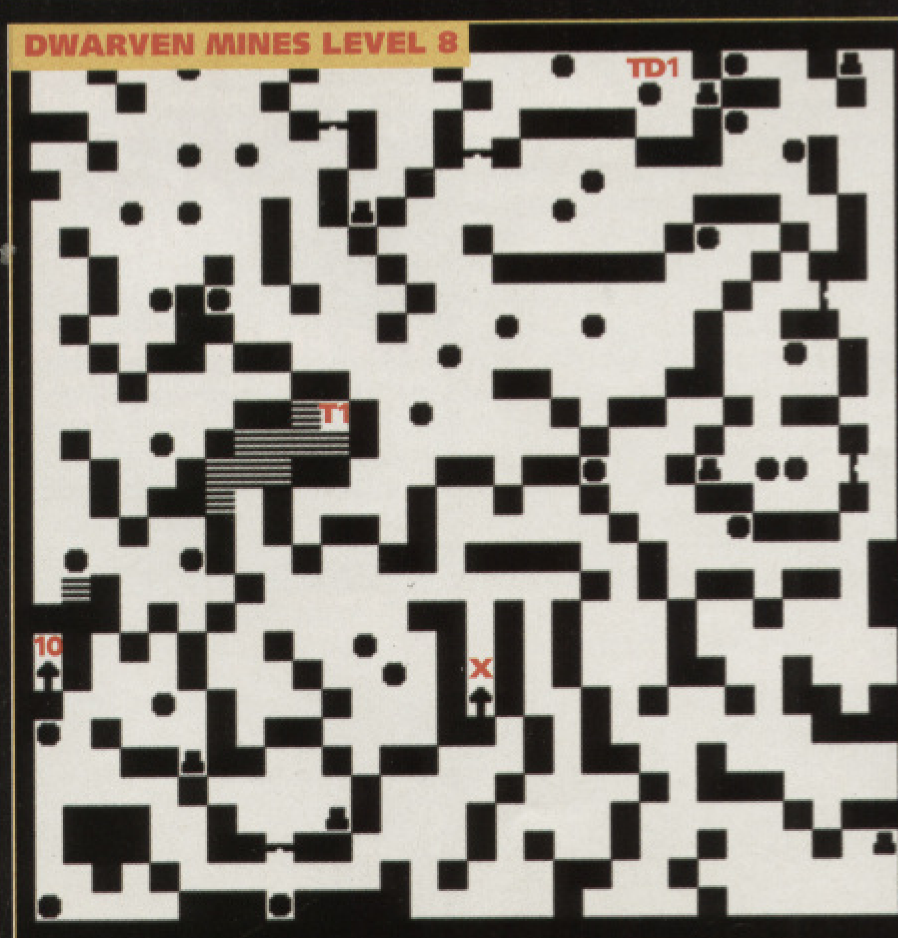
This is the final level of the mines, so naturally it's a little harder than the rest. From your starting place, go to the pit at (5,11) which will drop you right in it. That's location (5,13) in other words. Find T1 at (12,28) and step on it to be whisked to (24,30). Travel westwards toward T2 - the trap, not the film - at (30,1) which gives you a lift to (1,1). Use the S1 switch at (22,6) which reveals a pressure pad. Walk on the pads until some monsters appear. Kill them to get their key and head for T3 (28,1) which drops you back at the stairs.

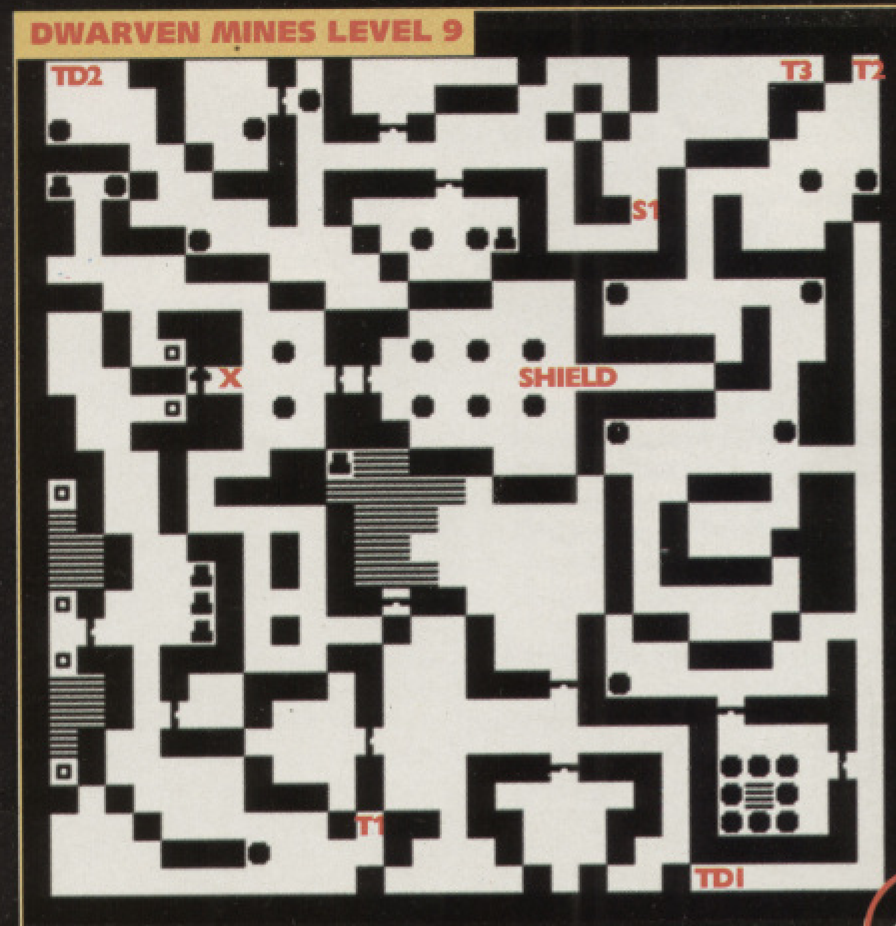
Open the door in front of you with your new key, and you'll see the object of your search - the shield. Collect it, and work your way back up through the dungeons to the outside world! Well done, you've done your second quest!

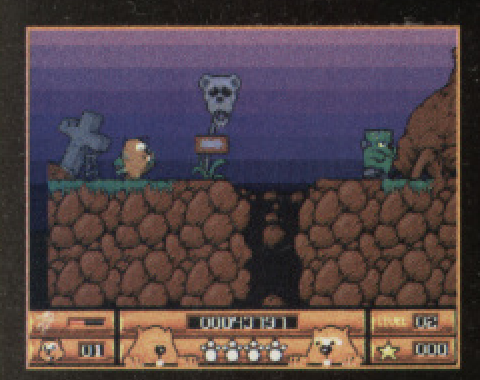







DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 8
TD1
T1
10
X


DWARVEN MINES LEVEL 9
TD2
T3
T2
S1
X
SHIELD
T1
TDI



BEAVERS

Grandslam's cute little platformer isn't the easiest around, so we've had the guys at Grandslam beavering away (groan) to bring you a tip for every level.



On Level 1, to avoid being punched by the extending boxing gloves, jump forward as though you are going to leap over them. In mid-air, though, turn and land back where you jumped from as they rise. Now when it falls back, you have stacks of time to jump over it before it punches again.

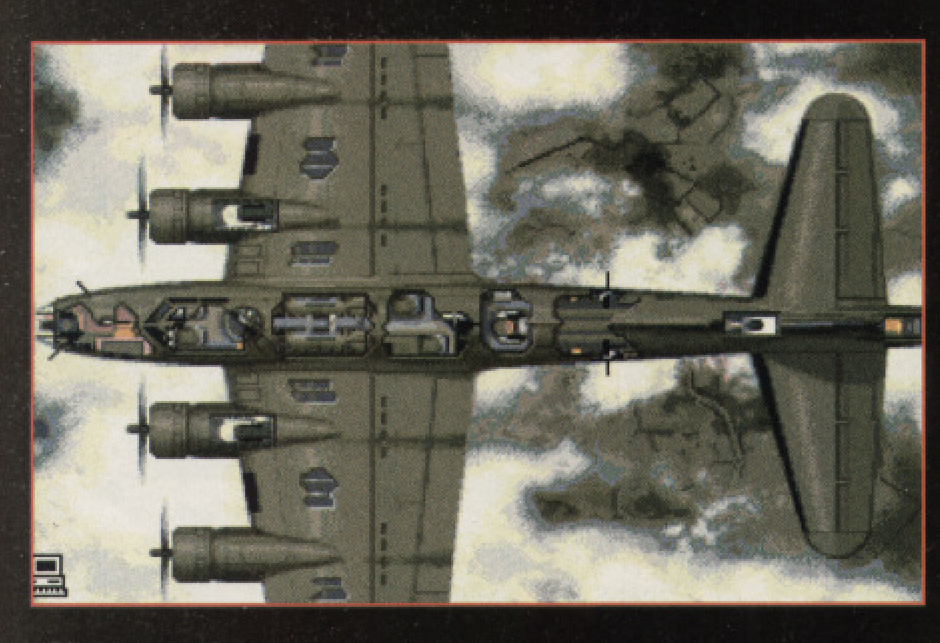
On Level 2 avoid all the green nasties. None of these can be killed with Jethro's tail, so jump over them every time. Also, in the bottom right of the playing area, you'll find a long line of stars. Don't miss them!

Level 3 is short and sweet. The only real problem is the rock men that hide in front of walls. When walking past walls, look very closely for any unusual bumps!

On Level 4 you'll need to find the three different switches dotted about the level before you can leave. The hat can be found at the bottom-left corner of the level and the exit is located in the top-right corner, so there's a fair bit of travelling involved.

Level 5 is a very long level, but try to take your time. Some of the ledges are quite tricky, and if you try to rush through them you'll simply fall off and die. The exit is underwater, so you'll need to go swimming for some distance before you find it.

B-17



DOWNING THE NAZIS

The first real big problem that most people have is actually shooting down enemy planes. It has to be said that these beggars move quickly, and tracking them when they come into range is a skill all unto itself. So, instead of starting from scratch and wasting all that time, let the computer take control of the guns for your first couple of goes, and watch how it aims and the points at which it fires.

Before too long you'll spot the correct techniques for each gun post and be able to start taking shots for yourself. Even now, though, don't take complete control. Sit back and let the computer track the planes. Then, when the planes are coming into range, take over and use your new found talents.

WHERE AM I?

Navigating is another problem. After all, this isn't the latest and greatest thing to hit the skies, you know. Two very important points are these: First, the easiest way to maintain a course is to keep an eye on the pilot's instrument panel and steer the plane using the rudder. It might seem a little unorthodox for those of us who are used to flying by the seat of our pants, as old Major Bill would put it, but it saves a lot of time in the long run.

When flying to a target, fly manually along a course you devise yourself. Doing this rather than flying an automatic course allows you to bypass large amounts of enemy fighters and flak. Make sure the formation squadron follows you but, whatever you do, don't get lost along the way.

Take full notice of the messages that appear, but don't rely whole heartedly on them. If your co-pilot has been hit, then you won't get any warning messages should any of the engines catch fire, so make constant checks of the craft. Check that all the crew are fit and fighting, and that none of the guns are jammed. Even if you do get messages telling you of these, it's all too easy to miss them in the heat of battle!

THE FLYING DOCTOR

Watch out for both pilots' health. It's worth keeping both of them as well as possible for more reasons than just needing someone to keep the plane up in the air. Keeping one healthy means that you can bail out



The doors at the end of Level 6 do not take you to the exit as they should. Before they'll work correctly, you'll need to run to the extreme right of the level where you'll find a switch. Jump on this and the doors will work properly.

The bear on Level 7 is a real demon to beat, so don't try to kill it with your tail. Instead, wait until the acorns are thrown at you and then leap into the air spinning to knock them back at him. Take great care to avoid the flying rocks at the same time.

On Level 8, the message is quite clear. Use the clouds to your advantage.

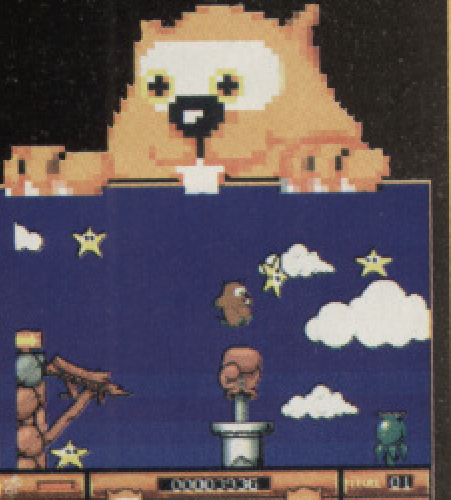
Level 9 requires similar tactics to Level 1. Keep moving about so you don't get caught by the scroll. If you are really daring/stupid/lucky you'll collect loads of stars but we don't recommend it!

You need to be very careful with the snowmen on Level 10. Spin into them to break them up and then trick the resulting bad guy into falling off the ledges. The hat for this level can be found in the top left corner of the map and the exit is in the top left, so keep going upwards!



Level 11 involves those ever useful clouds once more. The hat is hidden in the top right corner, so you'll need to use the clouds as stepping stones. Once you have the hat, you'll find the exit immediately below.

Finally, Level 12 shouldn't cause too much of a problem. The only risk involved is when taking blind jumps off platforms. The trick here is to follow the line of stars leading down, as they will usually lead to another platform. Not always, but usually!



FLYING FORTRESS

Some people have trouble dealing with the kill. Others have difficulty just getting to the kill. Here's those lovely folk at Microprose to give you a little lift.

Turning off the engines while in flight might seem like a strange idea but in some cases its the best thing to do. When an engine is damaged, it can start leaking fuel, so the only realistic option is to shut it down. After all, it's not like it works or anything, so what not save that precious fuel?

BOMBS!

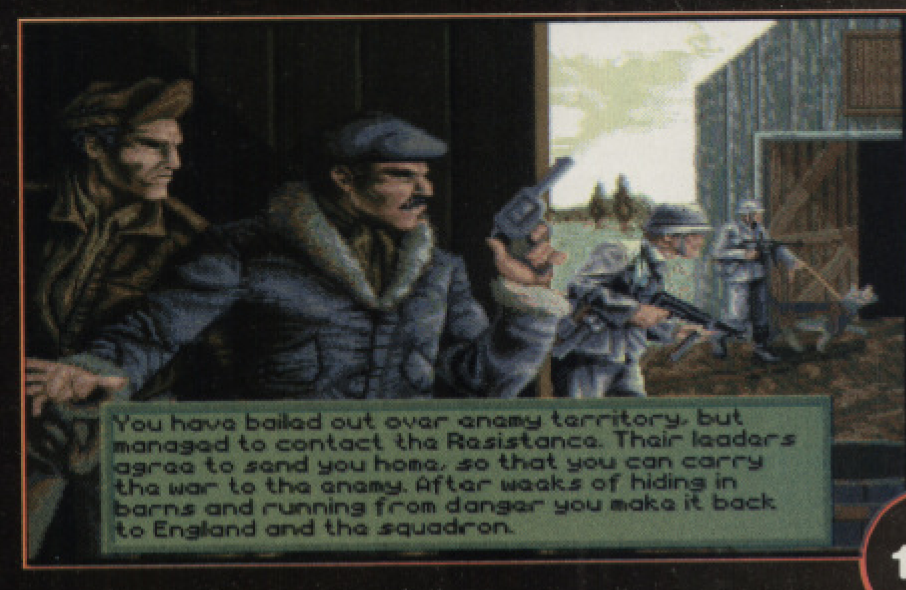
A few words on bombing. The Norton bomb sight will give you a release cue at four notches as a rule, but don't rely on it too much. And WATCH YOUR HEIGHT! Flying at very low altitudes is great for avoiding flak, but there's no point risking blowing your tail off!





in times of trouble. For instance, if the plane gets hit while turning, it can quickly fall into a non-recoverable spin giving you little time to undo all your straps and get your head between your legs, let alone grab the card from behind the seat in front and give it a read. By the way, if you have an injured pilot, try and heal him before you land otherwise he'll be stuck in hospital, and we all know what that means!

A lot of problems can be solved by simply bailing out, such as trying to land an engineless, bullet riddled B-17 that's almost engulfed in flames. But is that really the end of all your problems? When bailing out at sea, there's no guarantee that you'll be rescued, so make sure your radio operator sends a 'Mayday' signal before you leap.



The start of the warm weather usually heralds the arrival of splendid golfing days with my great showbiz mates. I'll be playing the celebrity Pro-Am next month at Loch Lomond which means I'll get to see Connery, Tarby and Lawley for a few drinks at the nineteenth hole, if you know what I mean! Anyway, the only thing between now and then is two pages of piping hot tips for all your favourite games. Don't forget, if you know of anything which might interest me then send it in to: Mr Tips, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Remember, you could win a software prize.

SNIP

ACTION REPLAY TIPS SPECTACULAR!

Here we go once again with yet more top pokes for that Action Replay thing. Owners of this top piece of hardware will know how to use these cheats so I'll waste no more of your time and get straight down to business. Thanks go to someone who calls himself Zak for these.

BILL'S TOMATO GAME
Infinite attempts C07C 4E 71 4E 71

THE CHAOS ENGINE
Infinite cash C0972 A4E 714E 71

BC KID
Infinite lives 1558 4E 71

WIZKID
Infinite cash 1558 4E 71

DOODLEBUG
Infinite umbrellas 1F66A 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Infinite balloons 1F6C6 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Infinite potions 1F722 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Infinite clocks 1F778 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Infinite erasers 1F7B2 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Infinite lives 2228E 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71

SUPERFROG
Infinite energy C1D5AC 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Exit always open C17369C0 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71

LIONHEART
Infinite energy C04F62 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71
Infinite lives C05000 4E 71 4E 71 4E 71



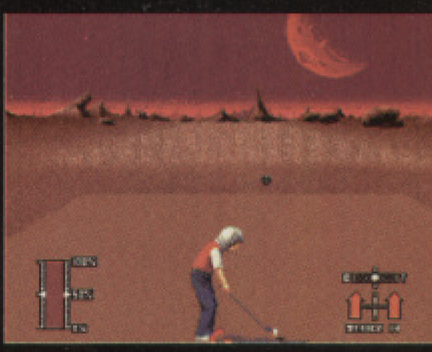
ALIEN BREED '92

I really do love my wife, believe me, but she doesn't half go on sometimes. Take the other day. She was playing Alien Breed '92 with the kids and she wasn't doing particularly well, I can tell you. "Give me some help you lazy good-for-nothing scallywag," she screamed. Being the obliging type I showed her the level codes. "That's no good - I want a cheatmode," she shouted and threw my dinner over the kids. "Alright", I said, "type 'I WANT FISH', with spaces, into any Intex system and then press the following keys during play for numerous effects and stuff.

F1 Death for player one
F2 Death for player two
F3 Extra keys for player one
F4 Makes player one lose a life
F5 Makes player two lose a life
F6 Destroys level
F7 Skips to next level
F9 Walk through walls"

NICK FALDO'S GOLF
Grandslam

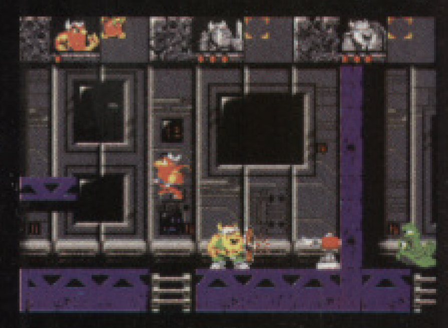
And talking of golf, here's a right smart cheat which calls up a mini golf course on Mars! Simply type MAJORTOM (Capital Letters and no spaces) on the title screen, select 'Choose Course' and you'll be striding down the Martian purples (as opposed to greens) slightly slower than it takes to click on Mars from the selection screen. Thanks to David Watson from London for that cheat - you should have received your software prize by now.



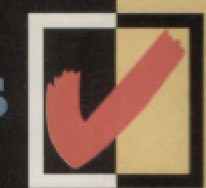


THE LOST VIKINGS
Interplay

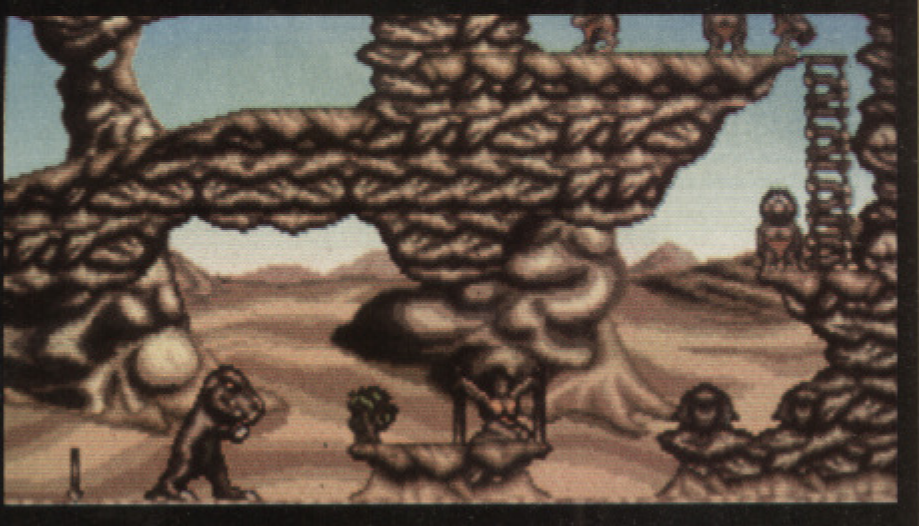
There are only so many Norse gags you can make and I'm pretty confident that we've exhausted all of them over the past couple of issues so it's a fairly boring start to this first set of level codes. No-one is responsible for sending them in so I've saved myself a few quid on a software prize. Good. Enough waffle, here we go - there'll be more next month.



1	STRT	6	FLOT	11	VLCN
2	GR8T	7	TRSS	12	QCKS
3	TLPT	8	PRHS	13	PHRO
4	GRND	9	CVRN	14	C1RO
5	LLMO	10	BBLS	15	SPKS



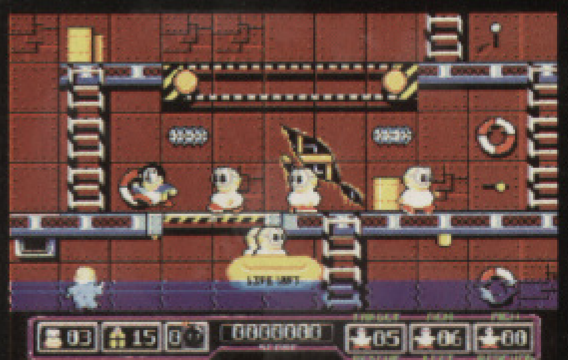
TIPS



DESERT STRIKE

Electronic Arts

You try stopping The One team from playing this excellent blaster when I've got a Cindy Crawford slideshow to have a gawp at. You can't. The only problem with Desert Strike, though, is that the game is occasionally a bit tight with the weapons. Couldn't you do with a few more Hyras and a couple of extra Hellfires? Of course you could. Well how about having an infinite supply? Not bad, eh? Simply use the code HARDCASE for instead of a level code and you'll be blessed with more firepower than you can shake a stick at. The only problem is, though, your power is severely reduced so - hey! - be careful out there.



SINK OR SWIM

Zeppelin Games

Just when you thought you'd seen enough level codes in one Snip Tips, think again because there are plenty more to come. Thirty nine, to be precise, from this inventive little puzzler. And - yes! - there'll be more next month.

2 BISHOPSMOVE	15 LARRYNIVEN	28 JOSIEWHALES
3 PATSY4KERMIT	16 KILLERWHALE	29 SOBRIETYCITY
4 HOWNOWPOWWOW	17 BLUEHORIZON	30 WHERESMEBEER
5 RINGWORLD	18 ARNIEMUM	31 HORSEFACE
6 TROUGHTON	19 LOGOPOLIS	32 GINASDINER
7 REDPLANET	20 DOCTORWHO	33 CHICKENFEED
8 MEGALITHIC	21 MRJONESPUPPY	34 CARROTCAKE
9 MYBREAKFAST	22 HYPERSPACE	35 STRENGTH
10 TINNYBOPPERS	23 ROBERTSMITH	36 NEEDLEMATCH
11 LOCKSALORDY	24 WHOWHYWHEN	37 YUMCHOCDROPS
12 HALLOWENVII	25 SICKATTACK	38 RADION90210
13 NEWMODELARMY	26 WELLINEVER	39 MISTLETOE
14 TIMEPIECE	27 MRPOTATOMAN	40 INDIANAJONES

CREATURES

Thalamus

The game was so-so-ish, we reckon, and you may well feel the same but there's no reason not to print this fine cheatmode. And anyway, do you know how difficult it is to fill two pages of tips nowadays? Bloody, that's how.

Pause the game and type in A FINE KETTLE OF FISH (including spaces) then use the following keys.

C	Cheat Mode Off	F6	Torture 2
F1	Stage 1.1	F7	Stage 3.1
F2	Stage 1.2	F8	Stage 3.2
F3	Torture 1	F9	Torture 3
F4	Stage 2.1	F10	Skip to next level
F5	Stage 2.2		

GRAHAM GOOCH WORLD CLASS CRICKET

Audiogenic

Fed up with feeling like the England cricket team? Then follow this tip and fret no more - you'll soon be bowling the opposition out for the grand total of no runs. When it's your turn to bowl, pick a leg or off spinner (cricket terms, these), then place the box as close to the bowler as possible and in line with the wickets. Now, if you bowl with no spin, the ball will bounce over the batsman's bat and hit the wickets. Brilliant!

Cheers-ears to whoever sent that in - you forgot to put your name on the letter but thanks anyway.

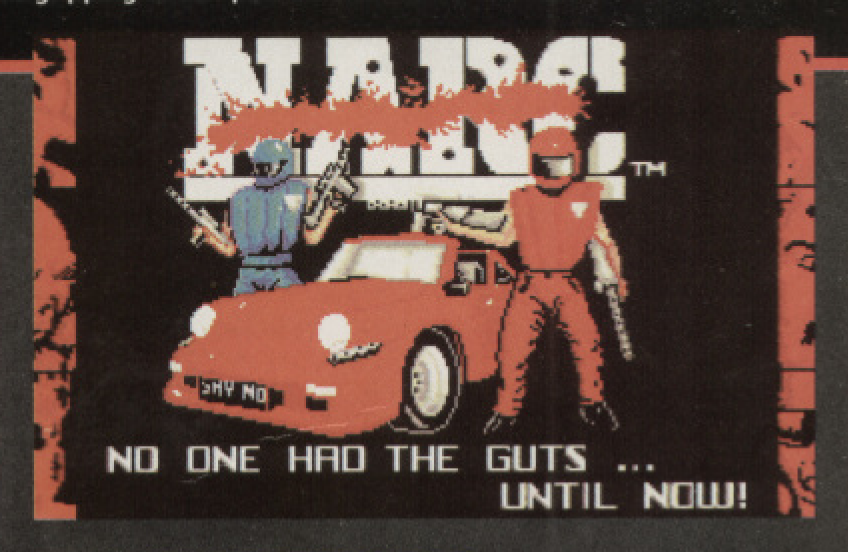
HUMAN RACE - THE JURASSIC LEVELS

Mirage

If you missed last month's instalment of the Human Race level codes then here's a quick recap. Some blue stuff appeared at number eighteen and started causing havoc with the leopard who was next door. The Slobs ate Mrs T who lived at number twenty nine and just when we thought it was all over, the mysterious Almanburie moved in to thirty. Moving quickly along, then...

31 GALLOWS FIELD	41 TURBO NUTTER	51 HASSLED
32 PLAGUE PIT	42 ITD BE OKAY	52 GOLD LABEL
33 CANDLESTICKS	43 IF THE FIRST	53 POULTRY GOOSE
34 BROWN SUGAR	44 LOT HADNT BEEN	54 KATE4LOUISE0
35 BABBLE	45 PUBLISHED	55 DRAKEER
36 BLATHER	46 POUCH	56 SOURFACE
37 TRADER	47 WHINGEING	57 LURCH
38 SCARY MAN	48 SAD BOYS	58 ENDOSCOPY
39 BOILED EGGS	49 CRAMP	59 JUST TAKE 5
40 NEED MORE	50 GLUM	60 HAVE A BREAK

This gripping tale of passion and murder will conclude next month.



TIPS OF YESTERYEAR

This trip down memory lane has rapidly become the most popular part of Snip Tips - it seems there are quite a few nostalgic bods out there, if your lack of correspondence is anything to go by. You may remember that last month I promised you the cheat for Thunder Burner but, if I'm honest with you (I do try, you know), I'll have to own up and admit to losing it. Actually Dave probably nicked it. But fear not, here's an equally oldy and goldy one for you to enjoy.

NARC

When the game starts, go right until the first dustbin appears, kneel down in front of it and keep shooting until it turns blue. You should now have infinite lives!

NEXT MONTH!

Oh, can't you wait?



GAMES SURGERY

Doctor David Upchurch is currently in court facing charges of malpractice so Matt the Medic moves into the surgery for the first time and invites you to tell him your troubles.

Dear Doc,
Unlike David Lamb I can not find the Idol O' Many Hands in THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND. I have completed the other two trials in a matter of a few weeks but this trial eludes me completely. I have been stuck for months so please help.
Jarrod Smith,
Chesterfield.

Ah, what better way to start my medical career than by soothing this recurring irritation. Right, first go to the governor's mansion and use the petal with the meat. Give this to the dog and enter the mansion. Fight the sheriff and go to the prison. Talk to the prisoner and go to the shop. Buy some breathmints then go back to the prison and give the prisoner the mints. Give him the gopher repellent and he will give you a cake with a file in it. Use the file to get the Idol. When the sheriff tries to drown you simply pick up the Idol. Super sexy - now you have completed all three trials.

Dear Doc,
I thought I had finally reached the end of THE LEGEND OF KYRANDIA, having reached the castle and located the chalice and the crown. I then found I needed the sceptre to complete the game. Can you PLEASE help me to find it as it is driving me (and my mum) mad. Please help me, I am desperate.
Laura Nelson,
Merseyside.

Once again, insanity looms over the horizon. There must be a lot of it going around. Here, take one of there and have a little nap. If that doesn't work, try looking among the utensils in the kitchen - two locations east from The Great Hall.

Dear Doc,
I need help badly. I am stuck on the first level of the Dark Tower in LEGEND. There are two doors that will not budge. Help!
Scott Shaw,
Midlothian.

Try this little manoeuvre with doors that don't open with keys: Position your runecaster facing the door, get him to make up spell missile - damage - damage, and then cast the spell to open the first door. Then reposition and cast again to do the same for door two.

Dear Doc,
I'm having some problems with your great demo disk (May), SON OF THE EMPIRE. Never having bought the first LEGEND game (only recently getting an Amiga 600) I haven't got a clue how to mix my own spells. I get as far as putting a rune and three ingredients up on the screen, however I don't know how to put up any more of these runes or ingredients, and if I did, I can't figure out how to save spells when I've made them. I have no problem mixing replacement spells for the eight I already have. Please, please tell me how to save my own spells as this is spoiling my enjoyment.
D. Roberts.

The spell casting is hard to describe without illustrations, but as you're familiar with the replacement spell mixing I'll try and explain. The first part of a spell must be one of the four direction runes: Forward - floor tile immediately ahead; Surround - eight floor tiles immediately surrounding the caster; Missile - a particular target tile; Continuous - spell continues to act upon target every four seconds (ish). The next element must be an effecter rune. There are many effects varying from damage to healing to teleportation. The runes are 'strung' together in as many ways as you like and will have effect in the order that you make them - e.g. the spell 'Missile, dispel, paralyse' will first travel to your specified target (the missile part of the spell), it will then dispel any protective magic that that target may have and then paralyse it. I think you get the idea.

You can string any runes together and even repeat them to increase the power of each spell, e.g. by mixing the spell 'Surround, missile, damage, surround, damage, missile, damage' you end up with a offensive spell of incredible strength. The manual's instructions are deliberately vague so that you have to experiment.

The third element is the actual ingredients which match up with each rune. When you mix, you must pick the first rune - then the corresponding ingredient - then click on the rune in the mixing window. The chosen rune should mix and now appear in the bottom left hand corner of the screen. Then the second rune and ingredient, and so on. Some of the ingredients will have to be found in the dungeons or bought.

Once you have your spell, you can remix by clicking on the 'bowl icon' on the spell scroll. You'll have to experiment to find out which ingredients match which runes. Well, that should get you on your way.

What's up Doc?,
I am in need of your consultation abilities. I am currently trying to solve two puzzle games: ZAK MCKRACKEN AND THE ALIEN MINDBENDERS and CURSE OF ENCHANTIA.
In Zak McKracken, I can't get into the sphinx. The witch doctor has shown me but when I come to draw it on the sphinx's leg it doesn't work. In Curse of Enchantia, what do I do with the planks of wood in the ship?
Gerald Oarkham,
Thatcham.

I'm more than happy to help you, me old mate Gerald. In Zak McKracken, go to the leg of the sphinx bearing the markings, and use the crayon on the markings to draw the symbol from Mars. With Curse of Enchantia, you need to enter the Marie Celeste's hull and place the planks in a 'T' shape across the stream. Cross this to get the cloth on the other side.

Dear The Most Excellent One,
I am really, really, really stuck on the CURSE OF ENCHANTIA. I can't get past the cavern part (the one with the well). Please, please, please, please can you help me as I am killing myself trying to do it. This would be a most brilliant favour to me as I always buy your excellent mag.
Richard Moss,
Doncaster.

I'm afraid that I have some bad news for you. Not only do you appear to be killing yourself - bad enough some would say - but you also seem to repeat most of you words at least three times. But, but, but I think that I can help you. You should have found a gold coin sparkling in one of the doorways back in the cave corridors, take that and throw it into the well. A game show host should now appear and offer you either money, a woman or a helmet(!). Take the helmet from him and go to where the boulders are falling, put the helmet on and move on. Good luck.

Dear Doctor David,
Having recently purchased SLEEPWALKER for charity purposes, I find myself a bit stumped. Are there any cheats that might make things a bit easier.
Paul Barker,
Kirkintillock.

I'm afraid that Doctor David is out of the surgery, but I will be happy to furnish you with a tip for this Comic Relief tie-in which should help to calm you down. Try typing in DINGADINGDANGMYDANGALONGLINGLONG - don't make any mistakes or you'll be really confused - on the title screen. You can check whether you have got the phrase correct by seeing if Lee and Ralph's noses have changed to green. Then, during the game, press TAB at any point during the game to top up your energy and receive nine lives. Also, the RETURN key will jump you on a level.

THE SURGERY IS NOW CLOSED!

Well, that's the end of my first month in charge of the loony-bin. But before I close up shop for the day, there would seem to be just enough time to remind you to send any problems that you may have to me at: Matt The Medic's Games Surgery, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Please don't phone in or send SAE's as I'm afraid I can't answer your queries personally.

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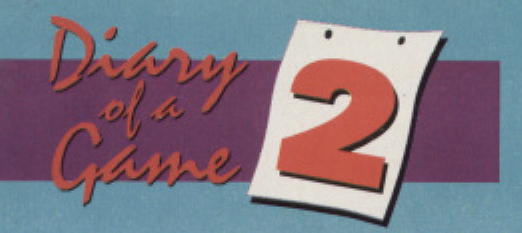
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AT LAST! NOW YOU CAN BE THE BOSS





ALIEN B

Last time was only the beginning... This month Team 17's Martyn Brown tells of being mobbed by fans in a Swedish night-club, accepting the award for Software House Of The Year at the Golden Joystick Awards, the agony and the ecstasy of re-releasing Project-X on budget... Oh, and there are also some more news on the progress of Alien Breed 2, the sequel to one of the biggest games of 1991.

THE MONTH IN BRIEF

This month has seen a more dynamic number of developments taking place in comparison to the last one, mainly because most of the equipment is working and Rico's been able to work all the ideas into usable graphics. More and more ideas have been thought up and should end up in the final game as they're rather good.

Our development meeting in Sweden went rather well, all three hours of it - but you can blame the freak brilliant weather and beautiful lakes for that. Anyway, what has everyone been doing...?



(Right) Johnson and Stone - back in action! This mocked-up shot should give you an idea of what the new sprites will look like in the final game.

RICO HOLMES (Graphics)

Since getting his Opalvision into gear and being able to work all day on his shiny new and now working A4000, Rico has been hard at work implementing ideas and upgrading the look and feel of the game. The result, in my humble opinion, is excellent - we are very happy with it. He's been concentrating on the Military installation building because it's more fun to draw (big guns and heavy security).



He's also done a sample map with the old map editor to try out some of the ideas like the large lazer turrets which you'll have to take out from another area. He also spent a long time animating and drawing the games four characters: Johnson, Stone, Ruffer2 and Zollux, two of which you can select from (each with different capabilities). The result is that the main game characters are MUCH enhanced over the original ones, which should please Gaz Whitta at least - even if he doesn't work on The One anymore. [Sorry about the re-used portraits from last month, AB2 fans. We'll lend Martyn a camera for when he next goes to Sweden! - Ed.]

ANDREAS TADIC (Programming)

Besides continuing his map editor (which has been put to one side for the moment) Andreas has been rejigging Project-X ready for budget release. We've changed quite a few points of the game and it's been Andreas's great pleasure in recoding those bits and putting the game onto our new disk system, the upshot of which is that the 'new' version of Project-X will fit on three disks instead of four like before, which is good news for us and good news for you (less disk swapping).



Andreas also scrapped the idea of a 'sprite playfield' for the A1200 version of AB2 because Rico was moaning that he wanted more than 16 colours for enemies/weapons and besides that there is going to be more than enough enemies on screen anyway - at least two times the amount in the first version and more enemies like gun turrets and other security systems.

All this means that the enemies and stuff on the A1200 version will be 128 colours and be really rather nice. People who are jumping up and down saying "Use 256 colours!" please be quiet - it looks rather good and using less colours means more action and more graphics! He hasn't scrapped this 'sprite playfield' thing though and will be developing his ideas throughout the game's progress, it's just that the routine will probably see the light of day in another Team 17 product.

We've rethought our options and have decided to develop graphics and routines for both the 16- and 32-bit versions concurrently, meaning that the A500 version remains as close as possible to the A1200 version - and if you take a peek at the graphics you'll spot that the A500 version is looking pretty spiffing, even at this early stage!

MARTYN BROWN (Chief bottle washer)

It's been a case of continual suggestions, ideas and whatever from my point of view. The characters in the game will reflect their personalities. Johnson and Stone (Federation Corps) are back by demand - we had lots of letters asking for them to be in the sequel, which we never expected, but



REED 2

we will bow to public demand! The other two, Ruffer2 (a fast alien/lizard-creature working for the Federation) and Zollux (a bio-form robot with special capabilities such as IR vision and heat/motion detection), are newcomers and to be honest it's all a throwback to the days of Gauntlet-style character selection.

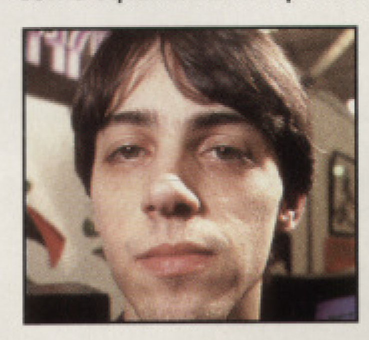
The military zone is going well, lots of ideas and stuff going... These zones will have to be cleared one by one as you make your way down to where large motion is being scanned. To get to the military zone you have to bypass the civilian building and the science blocks which are played in a different way. It looks like we will expand the science/military blocks much more than we first anticipated, making for a much larger game. Also people should note that in this game, enemies will be firing back... a subtle difference I think you'll appreciate!

I'm looking forward to the design of the science blocks and the jars of alien-experiments which can be shot open and therefore let loose. We plan to feature the alien lifeforms (some very bizarre) in a subtle way as the game progresses. You'll find evidence in some areas, the odd one or two in certain areas and then the experiments and proof, etc, before confronting them head on later in the game.

I also had the task of attending the Golden Joystick Awards where we managed to win ourselves an award (Software House Of The Year, no less) and get rather inebriated whilst doing so. I also got to call Jonathan Ross "Johnnyboy!" which went down about as well as the Titanic. At the end of the month I'm flying off to the CES in Chicago for a week - which won't please my girlfriend (ey-up Katrina!) much, but I suppose if it has to be done then I better go...

ALLISTER BRIMBLE (Sound)

Strangely enough, Allister has been to the zoo! Not though, as we had all suspected, to see some equatorial sheep or other warm-bodied woolly creature but to digitise some grunts and animal noises (he ought to take his big DAT recorder around to Gaz Whitta's pad). He's also begun working on a title score and other sound FX. The sound/speech in the A1200 version is going to be really good!



BACK AT TEAM 17 HQ (Packaging, marketing, etc)

Another quiet month back at base, although the box artwork was discussed and it looks like we'll be going for a similar design to the original, although I thought we would be better off going for an Alien over-shadowing the planet looking really nasty, as if it's just about to take a great big chunk out of it - if you can visualise that. However, I appreciate everyone isn't as warped as myself and that idea has been thrown out.

Yet again the phone has hardly stopped ringing with people asking when Alien Breed 2's going to be out and if it will be coming out on the A500. YES YES YES! For some reason, people got it into their heads that this was an A1200-ONLY version and that's simply not the case.

We also received the ELSPA (European Leisure Software Publishers Assoc.) directives on leisure software contents and we have to bear these in mind when developing the game. This means that we can't show mindless violence, mention vomit, poo or anything remotely disgusting that would aid us in creating an atmospheric and creepy plot. But don't worry, I'm sure we'll be able to do something to give the game a nauseating aspect somewhere along the lines. Anyway, on with this month's diary.

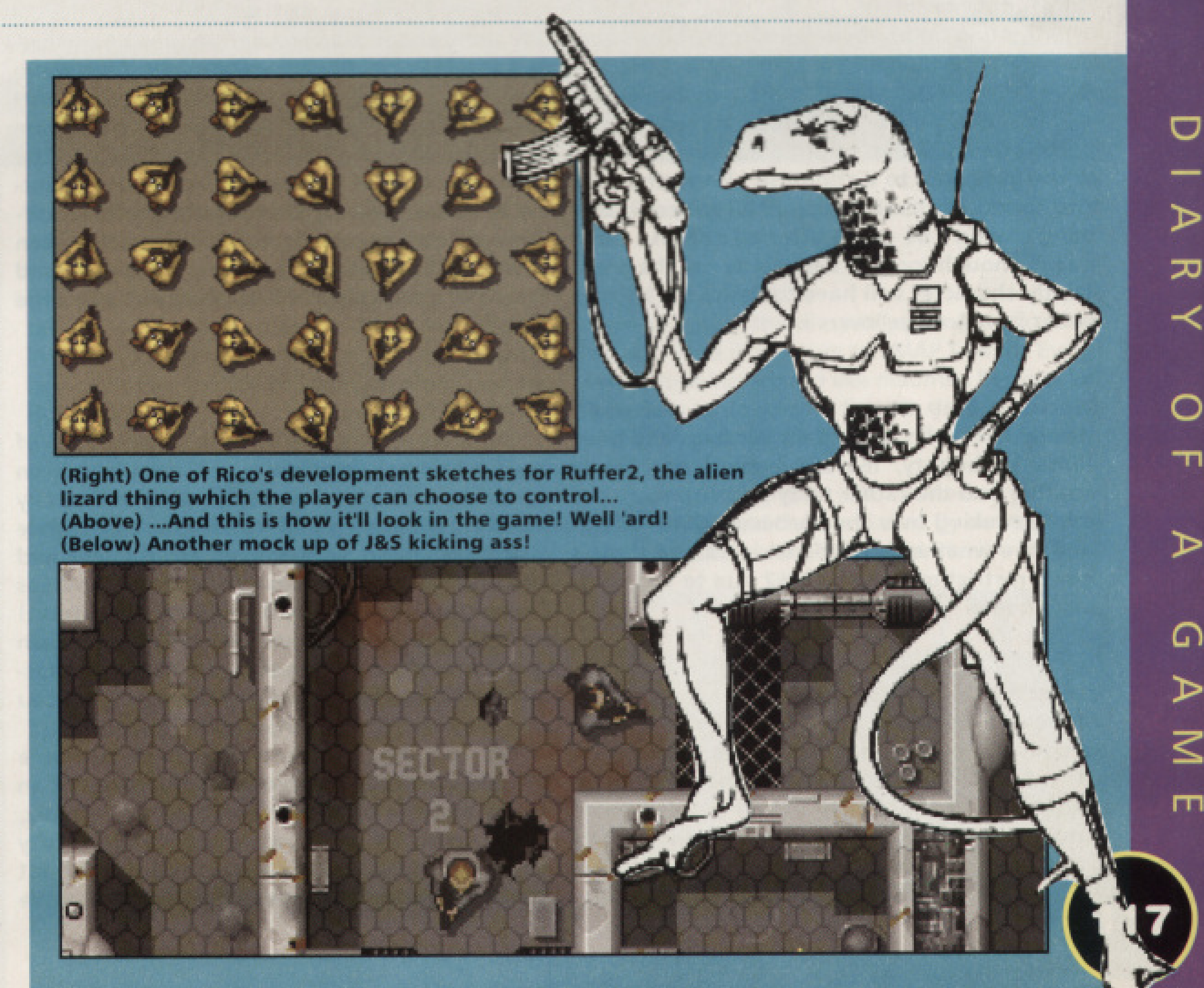
THE DIARY!

Thursday May 6th

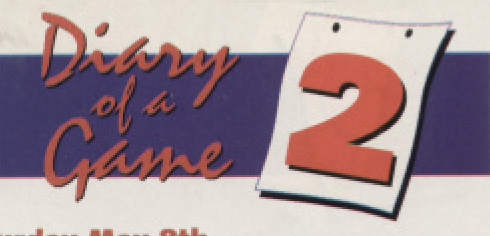
Myself (Martyn) and Mick (Robinson, the MD) head off to Sweden for four days, this is to be spent discussing the project with Andreas and Rico, who are both based in Olofstrom, southern Sweden (about 100miles north-east of Malmo). Clutching various duty-frees (notably Southern Comfort and Jack Daniels) and the goodies for the lads (eight Pink Floyd CDs and two rather spiffy PF T-shirts for Andreas and Marmite/Fig-Rolls for Rico) we arrived safely via Copenhagen and the hovercraft.

Friday May 7th

The weather takes a turn for the worse - i.e. it's absolutely stunning, clear blue skies and about 30°C. This is not good as it means that nobody really feels like doing any work whatsoever. The result is that we all spend the day lounging around sipping beers, chatting about ideas and other points of interest. We take a walk around the awe-inspiring local lakes and then settle down for barbecued steak n' sausages - it's a hard life! At night we hit 'Toddez', a local pizza place that doubles as a pub and enjoy the local speciality, massive glasses of beer at £7 quid a chuck... We stagger home and collapse into bed in the early hours.



(Right) One of Rico's development sketches for Ruffer2, the alien lizard thing which the player can choose to control...
(Above) ...And this is how it'll look in the game! Well 'ard!
(Below) Another mock up of J&S kicking ass!



Saturday May 8th
Unfortunately the weather hasn't got any better and the shorts are on again. Despite the bad development weather Rico managed to show me the reworked main characters and ideas for the Military zones which went down well.

In the afternoon myself, Andreas and Mick headed up to Vaxjo to see the guys at Digital Illusions. We've been speaking to them for quite a while about the possibility of them working with us, but that's another story and not the one we're talking about now! We spent a few hours with the guys and had a good look at what they were up to - they're a great bunch and we thank them for the visit. Next time they'll be coming down to Olofstrom for a beer session.

The weather took a turn for the better and, as we headed off into the rain and thunderstorm, we thought that we would start to get some serious work done... but, as luck wouldn't have it, when we returned back to Olofstrom it was bright and sunny and the barbecue was out quicker than an arctic fire.

Yet more relaxing, eating and drinking before taking in a night-club on a boat in nearby Karlshamn and partying through dawn. Sometimes we think of our jobs and large, smug grins render glowingly across our faces. It was also noteworthy that for the first time we met some actual Team 17 game fans at the night club... it's never happened before and we chatted with the Alien Breed fans about the sequel for a while before hitting the dance floor.

I also managed to have a strange conversation with a drunken Manchester United-supporting Swede who had seen the 'Leeds Glory Years' video and asked me to go through and name the 72 FA Cup winning squad, and with each name he gave a loud cheer... Strange chap.

Sunday May 9th
After getting up at about four in the afternoon, mainly due to the fact that nobody went to bed before 8.30am, Rico came round with his revised character graphics for the heroes. These were fine although I asked him to put a back-pack on one of the guys, just to distinguish him further. We also found out that the planned green lizardy thing couldn't be green after all because there wasn't enough room in the palette - so the green lizardy character will have to settle for being a rather jaundiced yellow.

Monday May 10th
Me and Mick reluctantly pack our bags and head home to blighty, leaving behind the lovely weather and the rather tasty Swedish sausages slowly cooking over the barbecue. Back in England, the weather is over-cast, cold and there's speed restrictions on the M62 due to fog. Welcome home.

Tuesday May 11th
Andreas starts work on remixing Project-X for budget release, so the map editor takes a well earned rest in the back seat for the time being. Andreas hates this PX work but it's got to be done... and he's the man to do it! Rico starts mapping out some of the ideas for the military level, including time-activated security doors, conveyor belts, security turrets and other stuff.

I spent the day at the Golden Joystick Awards and ended up breaking our award (a bit of welded copper stuff snapped off) and then continuing the party at the Elephant & Castle pub in Kensington, returning home looking pretty dishevelled via a disgusting InterCity 125 at 1.30 in the morning.

Wednesday May 12th
Everyone spent the day gloating about our award which now has pride of place next to all our others, i.e. it's the only one. But work must continue and Rico laboriously works his way through the mocked-up military zone and spends time reworking more graphics.

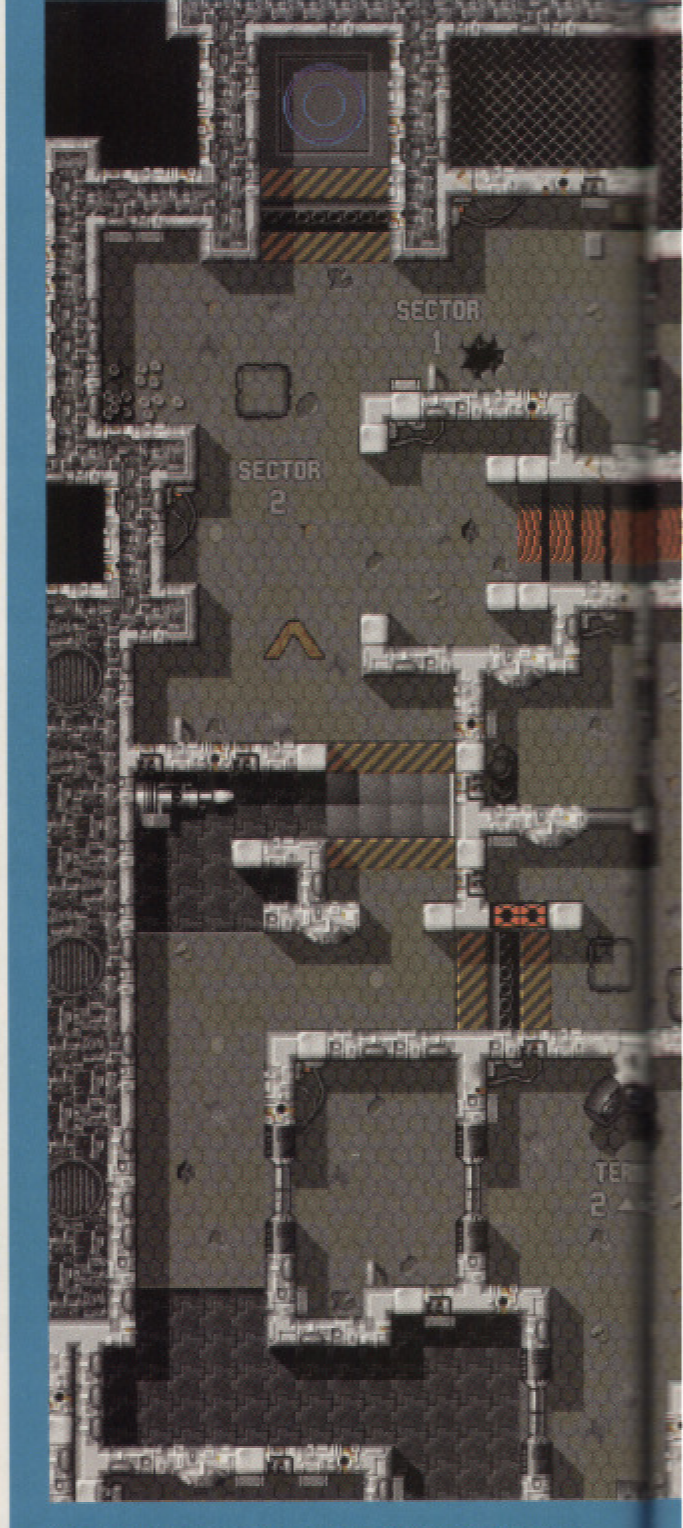
Thursday May 13th
The map is done and it's very useful for us to plan out the sort of traps and things we can do. I'm very happy with the way it's all looking and it makes the old version of 'Breed look very ancient in comparison. The A500 version s looking much better than we had all imagined, which is great news for everyone with an A500/600!

Monday May 17th
Rico has drawn what can only be described as a large 'blob'. This blob will form part of the military zone that has been over-run by alien life and features tracks where rotational turrets will run, forming an obvious barrier between you and it. The 128-colour version of the blob looks very nice, but once more - to everyone's surprise - the A500 looks very good too!

Wednesday May 19th
We think about exactly what's happening gamewise and decide that we want to put much more emphasis on the roles of the characters as they relate to the plot and missions. At the sâme time we want to add more action and much of the same sort of stuff that was found in, say, Gauntlet 2, in that each of the characters will act differently. We are aiming to give the robot/alien characters abilities such as infra-red and heat/motion sensing abilities which will affect the display.

Friday May 21st
Sometimes we wonder if there is some kind of golden halo lurking above our offices. We've been spending a couple of weeks working out exactly what we want from a 3D vector-graphics routine - speed, shading, light-source, etc, then we had been pondering where to get one from (Andreas doesn't have time to do it) and then - hey-presto! - one comes through the post from some Italian guy... and they are just about the most impressive we have witnessed on the Amiga! [You haven't seen Frontier yet, mate! - Ed.)

We ran the 3D planet/terrain demo on a souped-up A1200 (twelve times the speed of an A500) and the result was amazing - super fast, super smooth vectors updating at 50Hz (fifty times a second)! Called the guy up to find out that his English is just as bad as my Italian. We

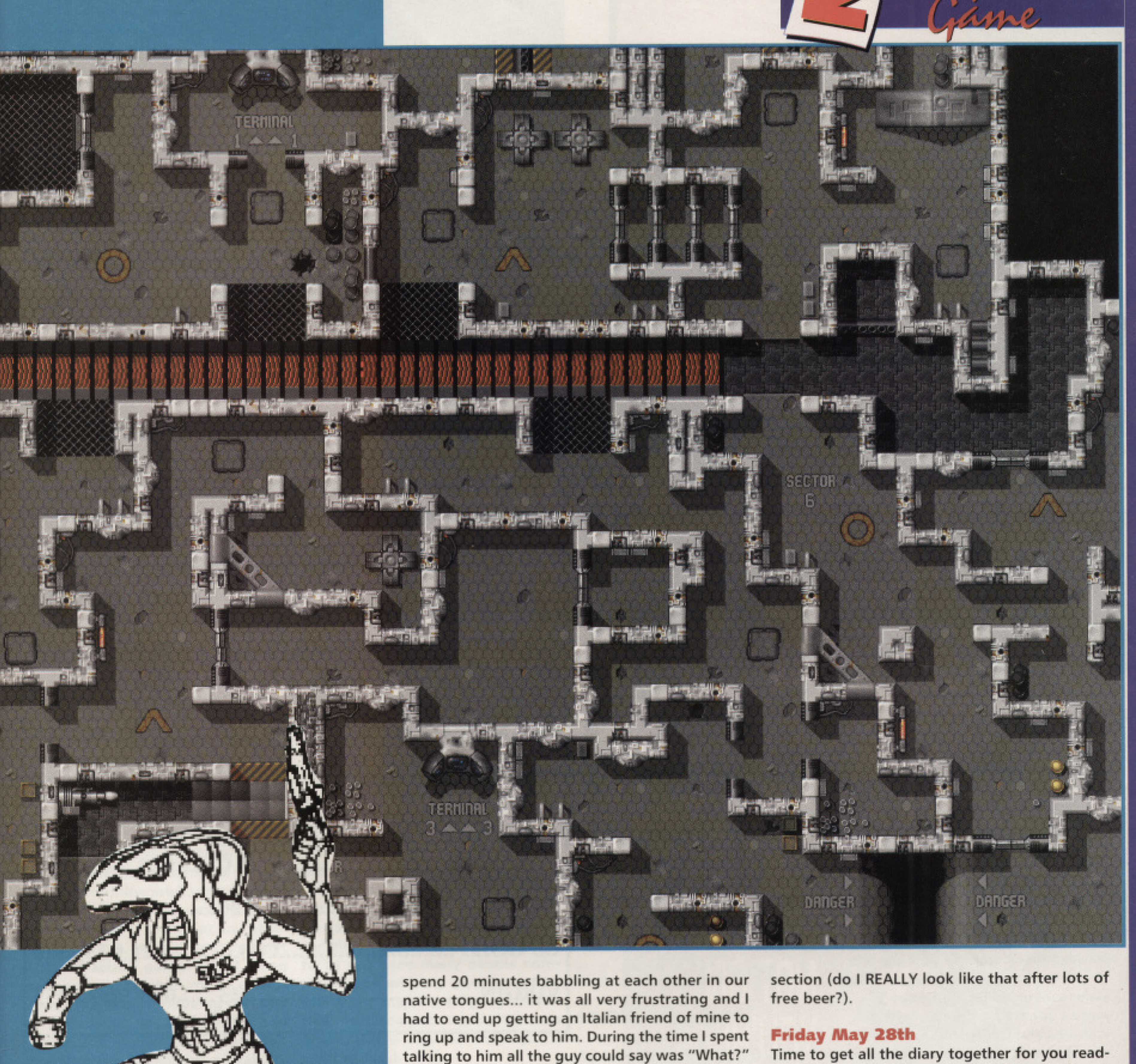


(Above) Just a small section of the provisional map that Rico's put together for testing some of Alien Breed 2's graphics and routines. It's doubtful that you'll see a layout precisely like this in the final game.

(Below) The animation frames for Zollux, the bio-form robot character.

(Below right) All of the animation frames for the new-look explosions. These are drawn in just four colours but, as Martyn points out, they stand out brilliantly against the grey backgrounds!





spend 20 minutes babbling at each other in our native tongues... it was all very frustrating and I had to end up getting an Italian friend of mine to ring up and speak to him. During the time I spent talking to him all the guy could say was "What?" in a style amusingly similar to the keeper of the bridge in the last bit of Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

Monday May 24th

Spent the whole weekend thinking what we could use the vectors for, but I'm not going to say as we want to keep something as a surprise! Rico heads back to England for a short break, spending time with his folks, and Andreas battles on with Project-X. I'm doing some work on some of our up and coming budget stuff, so AB2 development stalls once more.

Wednesday May 26th

I called in to see the chaps at The One and pick up a copy of the latest issue at the same time. Laughed at my lager-soaked picture in the news section (do I REALLY look like that after lots of free beer?).

Friday May 28th

Time to get all the diary together for you readers and send it all down to EMAP Towers. Everyone is running around like madmen because we have lots to do and no time to do it in...

Monday 31st May (Bank Holiday)

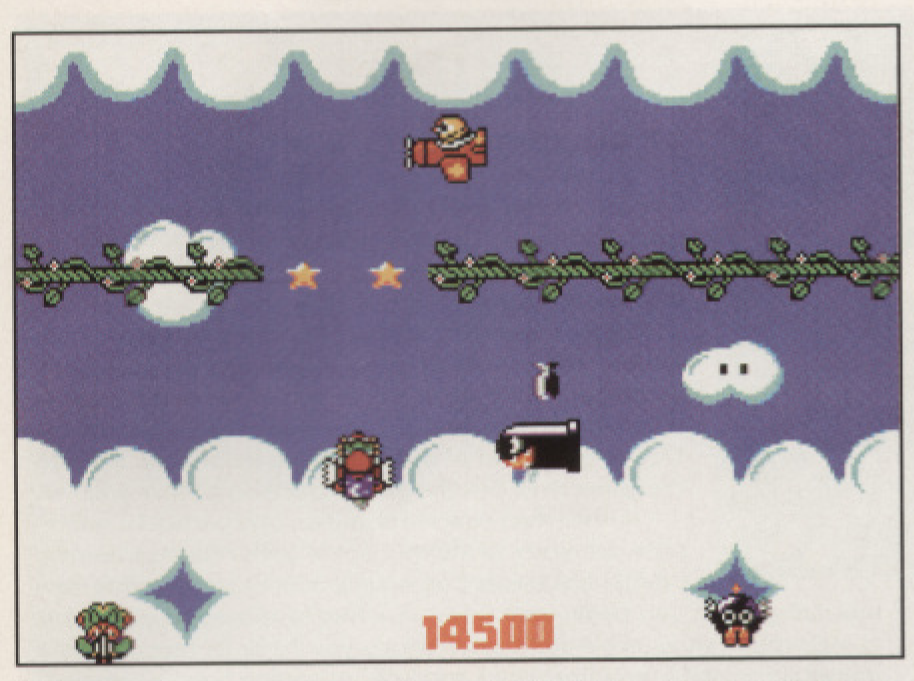
Myself, Mick and Debbie (Sales) fly out to Chicago to the CES show. It's a hard life...

NEXT MONTH

We might show you some of the vector stuff... More graphics... Even some aliens might make an appearance! And, of course, find out how things went in Chicago...

ADVERTISERS INDEX





Clean-shaven new boy Matt Broughton has been called in to help regular PD Zone host Simon Byron in a kind of pathetic double act. So sit back, put your feet up and munch on your choccy bar - the show is about to begin...



BOP 'N' PLOP

17 Bit, disk 2564.

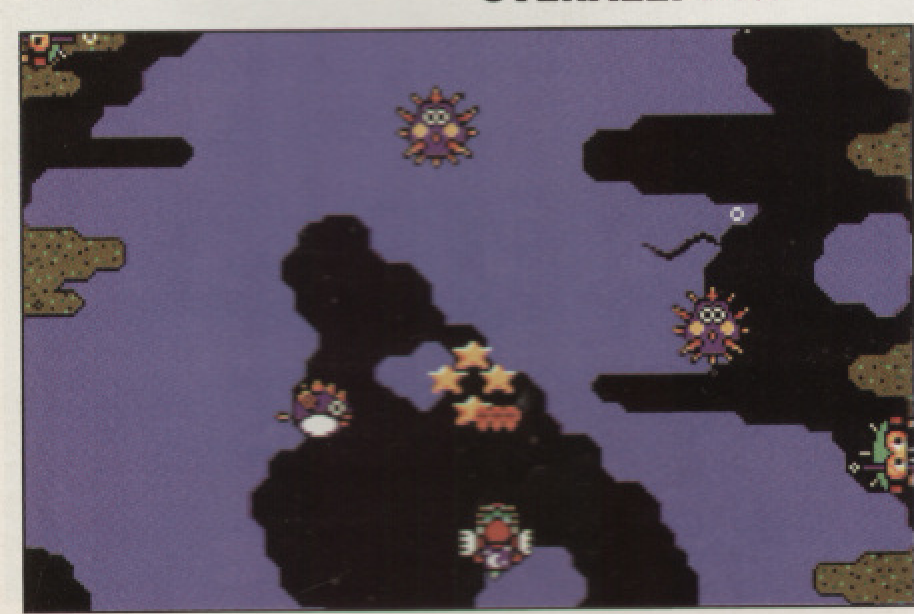
It's not often you'll find me singing the praises of a SEUCK game but seeing as I'm in a moderately good mood for a change I'm going to be Mr Nice from Pleasantville to it.

The first thing that you'll notice about Bop 'N' Plop is the graphics. They're not your usual SWIV rip-offs or ragged uninspired sprites; these aliens could have bounced straight out of Rainbow Islands or any other cutesy game. And if you thought that all SEUCK games crawl along tediously slowly then you're almost right, the exception being this one which moves, er, a bit faster and while this increase in speed isn't breathtaking, it improves playability no end.

Thankfully, whoever designed Bop 'n' Plop paid great attention to previous reviews of SEUCK games and ensured that the aliens don't take an impossible amount of hits before they blow up. Everything seems to be judged just right, even down to the solid walls which only just explode in time if your aim is spot on.

Another thing in Bop 'n' Plop's favour is the variety of the enemies. There aren't any complicated attack patterns or stuff like that but for a PD game they're well above par and certainly represent a challenge. In fact I can't see many people completing this within a week or so but, unlike the majority of programs in this overcrowded Public Domain arena, this is a game which you'll want to finish. [SB]

OVERALL: 74%



ELEVATION 2

17 Bit, disk 2079.

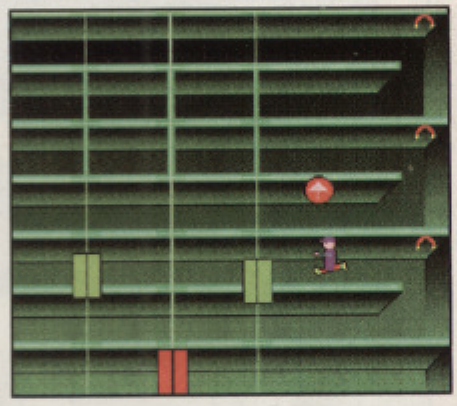
We loved the original Elevation so you should have heard us when this came in for review. The whole office was euphoric - we all fought for the joystick and settled down in front of the monitors. Then, just like the little kid in that story about the emperor's new clothes, Jenny turned round and said, "but what can they possibly do to make it any better?" There was an embarrassing silence and Dave left the room. "Let's see," I said.

Well, to be honest with you, there's not that much difference really. The gameplay still involves guiding Mr Badly Drawn through a series of elevator-infested levels - one touch from any of the constantly moving lifts and you'll lose a life. This may not sound like much fun but the action's fast and brilliantly simple. The levels get progressively tougher as you go on with some of the lifts assuming a more random motion so you can never be sure whether or not you're completely safe.

Oh, I forgot to mention the power-ups, didn't I? Yes, as is the 'norm' with sequels, there are a several icons which sporadically fall from the skies like so many bird droppings. These can slow you down, transport you to a higher or lower level... the list goes on, I expect, although those are the only ones I came across.

At the end of the day, you've still got the addictive gameplay with a couple of frilly additions and as the game was fun in the first place you really can't go wrong. [SB]

OVERALL: 82%



SPECTRUM EMULATOR

17 Bit, disk 2579(A & B).

If you know what the words 'Spectrum' and 'Emulator' mean then you'll pretty much know what these two disks are about. But only with the addition of 'Slow' would you be able to get the full picture.

Of course, if you've no idea what I'm talking about (not many people do, it seems) then you'll need a few more words before you decide whether or not to shell out for this program. So here goes, then...

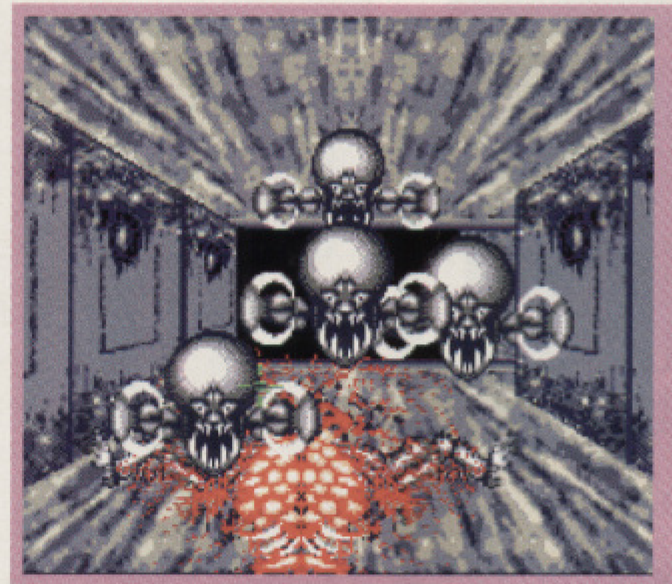
Basically, you load the Speccy (as they used to be known) Emulator into your Amiga and your super 16-bit mega computer will immediately think that it's a rubber-keyed doormat with no sound and sixteen 'kay'. You may wonder what the point of all this is - and you've every right to - but anyone who started their computing experience on Sir Clive's baby (the Spectrum, that is, not one of his offspring) will tell you that EVERY game money could buy was completely brilliant.

Of course, this isn't strictly true, as the passage of time has a habit of forcing you to remember only the good things (as anyone who's been following Grange Hill on

the telly recently will tell you - it's a lot worse than you thought) but there were some damn fine games none-the-less and what could be better than revisiting the year of yester and recreating them on your Amiga?

This could. What seems odd is that the Amiga (one of the most superior computers money can buy) has trouble being a Spectrum (one step up from a ZX81). Most of the games supplied play at a fraction of their usual speed and the A1200 isn't really much faster, which is a shame. If you can put up with this and fancy showing your kids what the Good Old Days were like then now's your chance. [SB]

OVERALL: 58%



ZALYCON

17 Bit, disk 2158(A & B).

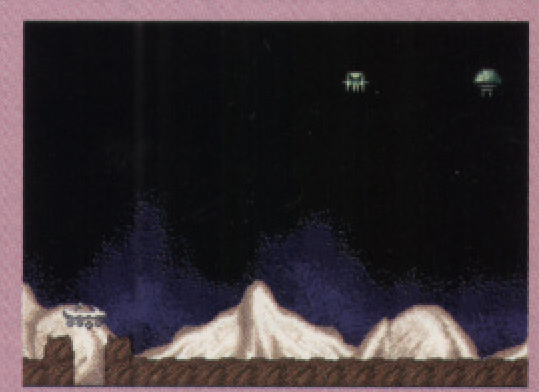
Zalycon can be easily described with one word: thestartofprojectxcrossedwithmoonbuggyandoperationwolf. One thing's for sure - this certainly isn't your average PD game.

Zalycon kicks off with a few static screens which outline the events prior to where the game begins accompanied by some impressive music which sounds suspiciously like one of Rob Hubbard's C64 tracks. There's quite a lot of disk swapping before you get into the game itself but the wait is worth it, believe you me.

Rather than concentrating on one particular gamestyle, whoever wrote this (some of our foreign friends, I think) has created an arcade adventure spilt into several sub-games. You begin your quest in a fragile spaceship which has to negotiate an asteroid field after which you have to race across a mountainous area, avoiding aliens and leaping gaping holes. From here you pick up a laser gun and enter an Operation Wolf-type game as you search the moonbase for something quite important (okay, I've forgotten what it is). Then... who knows? That's as far as I managed to get.

Zalycon is immaculately presented. The screens which pop up between stages help to build atmosphere and there are three difficulty levels which alter the way the game ends, apparently. You'll not find many PD games which offer so much variety and are programmed as competently as this so I'd advise you to give Zalycon a go. [SB]

OVERALL: 81%



GAMES GALORE 14

17 Bit.

You can more or less put a large sum of money on the fact that any games compilation you select from the many available will contain a few good games and a few bad ones. In the case of Games Galore 14 you would have won five hundred and seventy two pounds.

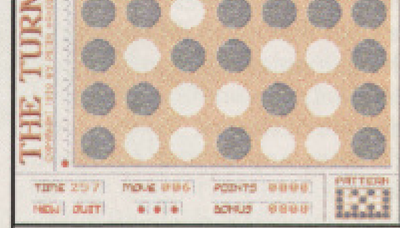
We'll begin with Deluxe Pacman because its the game I know best and I suspect the one you do too as it was on our April coverdisks. It's one of the best Pacman games you'll ever come across and certainly well worth snapping up (if you don't have it already, of course).

Next comes Tank Attack and I'll be blowed if this didn't appear on our coverdisks back in November. Based around the old Atari console game, you and up to three mates have to blast the hell out of each other and the last one left wins the game.

If you fancy non-stop thrills and excitement then don't load YatZ - it's one of the most boring things I've ever had to look at. It's based around Yatzee, it runs in Workbench and that's all I'm prepared to say.

Game Tamer is a handy program which has loads of cheats and tips on millions of games, all presented in an easy-to-use menu system. It's not a game at all so I've no idea why it's include on this compilation but it's good nonetheless.

Last up is a nice little puzzler called The Turn. You're given a pattern of white and black circles and by clicking on them you can reverse their colours and hopefully end up with the correct formation. If you like a challenge then you'll certainly get one here. [SB]



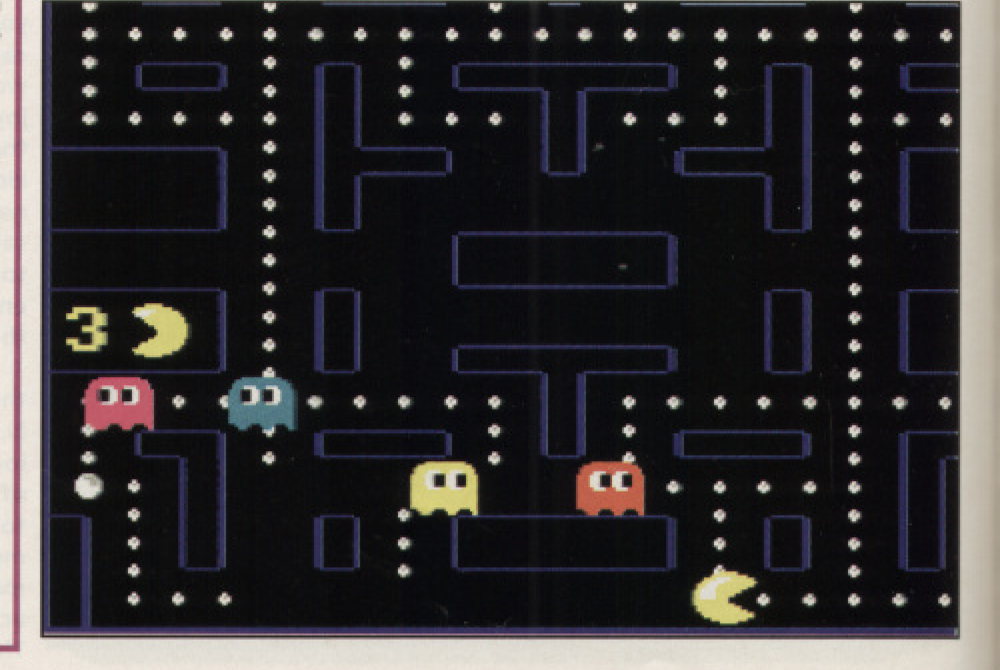
OVERALL: 76%

ARCADE CLASSICS VOL. 5

Carl Harper.

Nice one, this! First up is Dux, a conversion of an old arcade game called Carnival. Just for anyone who isn't familiar with this old chestnut, you sit, Space Invader-like, trying to shoot lines of ducks, rabbits, owls, etc, as they cross the screen above you. You're against the clock (just like Harold LLoyd, as I remember) and have a limited number of bullets at your disposal. More bullets are available by hitting specific targets along the way. Wow! Basic but cute.

The second offering here is a cracker! Transplant looks like an Asteroids clone at first glance BUT NO! If you remember the coin-op Sinistar, where you remained in the centre while the world span about you (David is quite good at doing that) then you've got a pretty good





ASSASSINS DISK 56

Fortiss PD

Picture Tiles - Sliding picture puzzle (Oh yeah! Hours of laughs!)
Storm Eagle - Very slow-moving SWIV using SEUCK.
Extreme Violence - Two-player hunt and shoot around a maze. Full review last issue.

OVERALL: 53%

ASSASSINS DISK 57

Fortiss PD

Poo Poo - Strange maze romp, interesting name though!
Dominoes - Er.....well.....yeah, dominoes. How attractive.
Dizzy Diamonds - Pretty good three-in-a-row Tetris variant.
Squirm - Strange game! Benny Hill meets Pacman and Centipede (ish!)

OVERALL: 57%

ASSASSINS DISK 58

Fortiss PD

Super Raid 4 - Good SWIV copy. If you like cheese, you'll love these.
Magnatron - Space puzzler involving... Magnetism!!! Woah!
Maiyessae - Nice title. NOT! Quite an interesting little SEUCK game involving plants and small animals.

OVERALL: 69%

ASSASSIN DISK 59

Fortiss PD

Turbo Thrust - Two-player, spit-screen, horizontal racing game. Not bad.
GX 200 - You're some sort of fat tank, and you plod through some sort of maze, shooting some sort of strange... things! (Don't ask me, I just work here.)
Leedings - Surprisingly enough, this is a lemmings clone, but this time you get balls instead of lemmings. Interesting thought.

OVERALL: 55%

ASSASSINS DISK 60

Fortiss PD

Pipe Master - Good Pipemania copy with Beach Boys soundtrack! Full review last issue.
Alien Hunter - Best of the bunch! Excellent overhead cross between Alien Breed and D-Generation. Get it!
Chinese Checkers - Solid conversion of the board game. A bit basic on presentation, but O.K.

OVERALL: 82%

idea of how the game works. As you get to higher levels, baddies start to vary in speed, size and firepower - you'll even find TIE-fighters on level 8! You have a handy radar on your side and you can upgrade your ship to match the challenge by buying shields, fire power and more ships. An excellent feature is the ability to play two player either as a team or in competition.

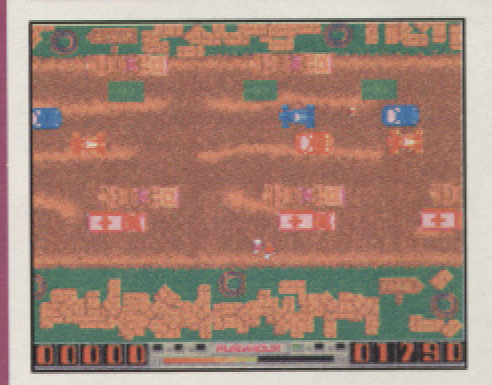
Next is Hellzone, an above average Nemesis/R-Type offering, followed by an average Pacman, which is quite like, er, Pacman. Yelp supplies us with another arcade conversion of the old classic Amidar. Get out the Dulux and paint them boxes! Not too shabby, really. As a token gesture there is also a Space Invaders copy, Invaders Mk 2, which is exactly what you would expect from a Space Invaders copy.

All the games here are well above average, and Transplant in particular is reason enough to purchase this splendid disk (if you missed the issue where it was on our coverdisks, that is). [MB]

OVERALL: 89%







ARCADE CLASSICS VOL. 6

Carl Harper.

This compilation kicks of with the rather superb Deluxe Pacman, which leaves no doubt that there's still life in the old yellow git yet! The presentation throughout is high quality and the game has been given the full 90's treatment (i.e. power-ups all over the place, mate!). Yes, Pacman can now slow ghosts down with glue, freeze them with ice, blow them up with TNT, even get shields and guns! My word, hasn't he gone up in the world?

Hellzone 2 is much the same as the Hellzone mentioned above (same parents, you see!) and offers all the Nemesis thrills that you've come to love and expect. Apparently.

The third little doobie on the disk provides some relaxing fun in the guise of Rush Hour. This is a Frogger clone but with the added bonus of pushing old ladies in front of high-speed vehicles! (Warning: Pushing old people in front of high speed vehicles is a bloody stupid thing to do. - Ed.) Take your granny by the hand and storm off across the road at your peril! The cars and lorries move at a pretty frightening speed and you'll probably find it more fun to just count to five and run (with the old lady in front, obviously!).

Last but not least is Galaga '92, a decent compromise between Galaga and Galaxians. As with all games followed by some 90's date, shot down bad guys leave behind icons to power up weapons, shields, extra lives and the like. The aliens have some nice formations (5.9s across the board) and this is an excellent little time waster and, believe me, I've wasted enough. [MB]

OVERALL: 83%

THRALLBOUND

17 Bit, disk 1982.

Ever been to Norway? You have now. Ever been held captive by Vikings for a year? You have now. Well actually you've just escaped, and now you have to get away before they catch you and roast you over a spit, or whatever Vikings do to people they don't like. (Normally they get sent out on a date with Simon. - Ed.)

First thing to do in this little adventure is to mount a horse (fnar!) and ride off to the nearest village to plan your escape. At each location you'll get a little text description and a rather old-fashioned black and white picture. (OH MY GOD! I'M HAVING A FLASHBACK TO MY SPECTRUM DAYS!!! QUICKLY, ATTACK THORIN WITH SWORD!).

If you're familiar with the old text-style adventures you'll find few surprises or innovations here, so the game's chances of success are all down to its storyline and execution really. The village of Havguard has quite a few locations to start you off and there's a spattering of characters to interact with. The only problem is getting them interested, as no one seems partial to doing anything apart from drinking any ale offered to them, much like us here at The One.

After a while, though, things do start to pick up and you'll soon discover some chocolate

chips of humour have been sprinkled throughout the descriptions and responses. Whatever you do, don't try to examine the horse droppings. And even more importantly, DON'T TRY TO EAT THEM!!

If you fancy a blast from the past, you'll probably get your money's worth with this little darling. [MB]

OVERALL: 79%

GIVE ME PEE DEE!

• 17 Bit Software
1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 1DH.
Telephone: (0924) 366982

• Fortiss PD
PO Box 2, Earl Shilton, Leicester LE9 8LU.
Telephone: (0455) 850 984

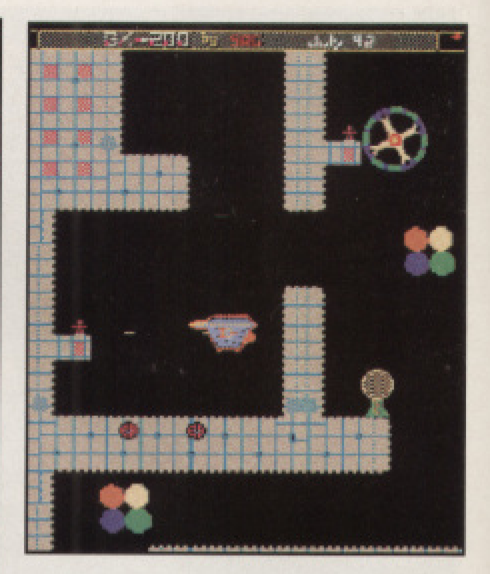
• Carl Harper
9 Hale Road, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 8SF.
All Arcade Classics disks (including the four previously reviewed) cost a thoroughly reasonable £2.00 each or £10.00 for the lot (a total of six). They don't cost £5.00 each as we said a couple of issues ago and we apologise for any inconvenience caused. We're really sorry, believe us.

GX-200

Fortiss PD, Assassins disk 59

Now here's a novel idea. You're in control of a spaceship thing which is stuck in a vast cavernous area populated by numerous alien creatures who all look like shapes you'd find in a maths book. Any contact with the walls or nasty creatures will result in instant death so the narrow passages are as much a threat as the firing aliens. Original? I don't think so. Fun to play? Sort of.

Fortunately there's no time limit which is a good thing as the mazes are quite large and it'll take you some time to work out how to reach and destroy all the aliens. You do have to take care when blasting away, however, as once a hostile being has been blown up, a fatal explosion usually comes hurtling in your direction which will cause you no end of grief (you'll lose a life, that is). You can only move on to the next level once you've cleared all the slimeballs from the cave you're on.



It's all fairly tough stuff which requires loads of skill if you're to make it through all six levels alive. There's not much in the way of variety but it's all good fun for a while at least and, as Michael Parkinson says on those stupid adverts, you can't argue with that, can you? [SB]

OVERALL: 68%

WIN! BILLIONS OF PD GAMES!

Courtesy of 17 Bit Software

We know what it must be like out there. You read four pages worth of hot Public Domain news every month and wish that you too could experience the excitement, the thrills, the downright sexiness of all the immensely playable games written by Amiga enthusiasts especially for you. These coders don't do it for vast sums of money. Oh no, they do it for personal satisfaction which is why many games (Transplant, Cybernetix, Zeus, Oblivion... the list goes on) are much more enjoyable than many full-price releases. Wouldn't you just love to have billions of these games at your immediate disposal?

Of course you would. And in a coincidental kind of way, 17 Bit Software has kindly donated not one, not two, not three, not four, not six, but five of their completely brilliant 17 Bit Collection double CD packs (worth forty quid each!) which contain all kinds of amazing things, from demos to clip-art with a healthy dose of music disks, animations, utilities, sound samples, and (yes!) games, games, games thrown in for good measure.

Of course, you'll need a CD drive or a CDTV to be able to make use of the 17 Bit Collection but we reckon that if you win a pair of CDs then it's well worth splashing out on a CD drive as there's endless amounts of entertainment to be had from these two disks.

HOW TO ENTER

Entering this marvellous compo couldn't be easier. Simply answer all the questions correctly, pop the answers on a postcard or the back of a stuck-down envelope (you wouldn't put it on the front, we hope, as that's where the address goes) and send it to: Much More Than 17 Bits Worth Compo, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, to arrive no later than 28th July 1993. The first five correct answers we pull out of Dave's pockets will each win the 17 Bit Collection. Easy, eh?

(1) What phrase would you usually associate with 17 Bit Software?

(A) That bit better than the rest.
(B) Cheap 'n cheerful.
(C) We know Team 17 quite well.

(2) How many games has 17 Bit Software had featured in this month's PD Zone?

(A) Four.
(B) Five.
(C) Six.

(3) What year was 17 Bit started?

(A) 1987.
(B) 1988.
(C) 1989.


A CUT ABOVE THE REST!
No other magazine covers Sega Megadrive and Mega CD like the "all new" Megatech ► Reviews from the cutting edge ► Hyper game previews ► Massive tips from the Technique Zone ► Plus razor sharp writers with Haircuts to match.
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RECOMMENDED

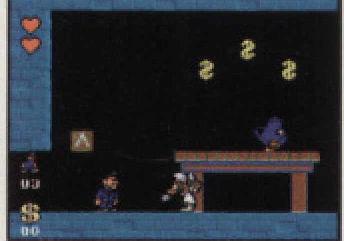
I know what you're thinking. You'd rather spend your hard-earned cash on some King Cones and a couple of those FAB lollies. We know it's hot (even Simon has aired his shorts for the first time this year), and you'd rather be out playing in the park and doing all kinds of summery things. But think again. Every game listed over the next four pages is worth having, whether you have to foresake an ice cream delight or not. So stop thinking about dietary needs, get down to your local software shop and snap up all the games we've rated. They really are very good, you know.

The Addams Family

90%

Publisher	Ocean
Issue Reviewed	June 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Guide Gomez across tonnes of massive levels in an effort to rescue the rest of his family in one of the finest platform romps to appear on the Amiga so far. Bundles of secret rooms, devious traps and fluid playability make this film tie-in a 'must buy' for all avid fans of the platforming genre.

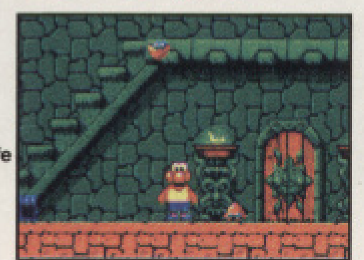


The Aquatic Games

84%

Publisher	Millennium
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Although this type of 'waggle your sticks' sport game went out with Noah, The Aquatic Games injects new life into the old dog by introducing a number of unusual events. Packed full of cartoony visuals and aided by a bouncy soundtrack, the AG's should entertain most owners with a sense of humour.

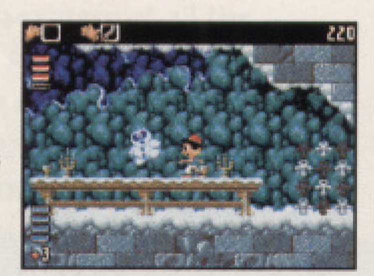


Arabian Nights

90%

Publisher	Krisalis
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Yes, Arabian Nights is yet another platform game, but don't yawn and turn over the page because this one is really something rather special. It's fast, looks good, sounds terrific and plays superbly, but on top of that it's got some excellent 'arcade adventure' aspects to add a touch of depth. Smart stuff all round.



Archer Maclean's Pool

90%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

When Jimmy White's Snooker was released, the public lapped it up in droves. Archer has used the same game engine to produce a game which is arguably better than Snooker due to the fact that Pool is a more accessible and easier to play sport. If you missed out on JWWS then you'd better pot this 'un.



Assassin

92%

Publisher	Team 17
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Assassin is a Strider-based arcade shoot-'em-up which blows the rest of the rest of the feeble attempts clean out of the water. With perfect control, five massive levels, gorgeous graphics, inspiring sonics... Need we go on? Assassin should be in everybody's software collection, now!



Beast 3

90%

Publisher	Psygnosis
Issue Reviewed	September 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

Whilst the first two Beast games were lovely to look at but crappy to play, Beast 3 show exactly how it should have been done. It's still dreamy to watch but underneath the visuals there's a right stonker of a game. The cleverly designed puzzles and frantic non-stop action should keep most entertained for weeks.



Body Blows

92%

Publisher	Team 17
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

You've read the hype and we've had the phone calls but now, at last, Body Blows is here. And - yes! - it is better than Street Fighter 2. The graphics and sound are as excellent as you've come to expect from Team 17, and the fumpin' gameplay is fast and furious. Every Amiga gamer, beat-'em-up fan or not, will love this.



The Chaos Engine

85%

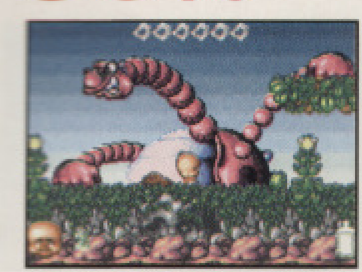
Publisher	Renegade
Issue Reviewed	February 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

It's been an age in the making but the wait has just about been worth it. TCE is basically Gauntlet with knobs on - but what knobs! Computer-controlled, artificially-intelligent second player, music that changes with the action, RPG-like character development, the list goes on. Great fun, all in all.



Chuck Rock 2

86%

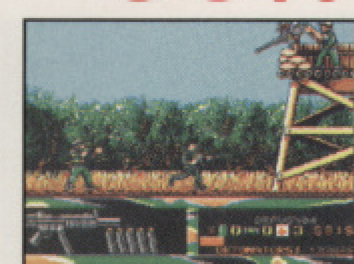


Publisher	Core Design
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

CR2 stars baby Chuck Jnr in a perilous trek across loads of gorgeously-detailed and heavily-parallaxed scrolly levels in an attempt to rescue his dad, the famed Chuck Rock. Although familiar platform stuff, the huge, imaginatively-drawn baddies and tongue-in-cheek humour makes this a winner.

Fireforce

90%



Publisher	ICE
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Yet another blast from the past, Fireforce has distinctly Green Beret origins. Who cares where it comes from when the end product is this good? Violence and more violence (with some distinctly realistic throat-slitting) make this horizontally scroller a game which you should hide from your granny.

Civilization

81%



Publisher	Microprose
Issue Reviewed	August 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

Sid Meier does it again - and you thought he couldn't beat Railroad Tycoon! Your job? Evolve your populace up from the Stone Age to the 20th Century and beyond. The strain of the port from PC to Amiga shows sometimes in the disk accessing, but the involving strategic gameplay more than compensates.

Flashback

93%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Flashback is from the French geezers wot brought you Another World. If truth be told it's not quite as stunning as that classic but it's a close run thing. The animation of your character as he runs, jumps and fights his way, Prince of Persia like, through the alien world is superb. A platform game fan's dream.

Combat Air Patrol

89%



Publisher	Psygnosis
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

In the same month we review Desert Strike along comes the similarly Gulf War-inspired Combat Air Patrol. It's a flight sim with its eye firmly on playability rather than rigorous technical accuracy, so while it may not impress the sim hard-liners the rest of us will have a whale of a time. The 3D, by the way, is great.

Goal!

91%

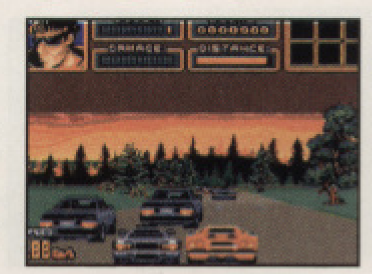


Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	June 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

The game that would be Kick Off 3 is finally here and it's a scorcher! While not as instantly accessible as some of its rivals there's a wealth of option that you can toggle on and off to make life easier. In our book it's not quite the Sensi beater that some would have you believe but it's great none-the-less.

Crazy Cars 3

90%



Publisher	Titus
Issue Reviewed	August 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Another series of games where the third proved to be the best of the bunch. Forget the previous two, or most other sprite-based racers - this game is one of the contenders for the racing trophy. It scrolls, plays and moves so well that you'd be a fool to let this one overtake you.

Indy Jones IV (Adventure)

88%



Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	January 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£37.99

Many consider Indy IV to be the best graphic adventure ever and thanks to its superb graphics and sound, multiple plot paths and marvellous atmosphere they're not far wrong. However, on Amiga the enjoyment is marred slightly by extreme slowness in places and some annoying disk swapping problems.

D/Generation

89%

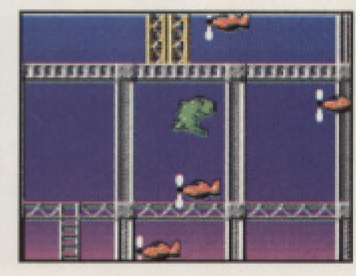


Publisher	Mindscape
Issue Reviewed	July 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£19.99

A throwback to the old days when isometric games ruled the waves, D/Generation hides its storming gameplay underneath some 'alright' graphics. An arcade adventure in its purest form, immensely suspenseful and cheap as well, you should seriously think again if this isn't in your disk box.

Hoi

90%

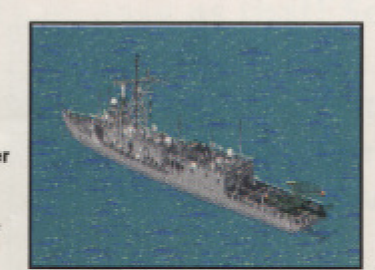


Publisher	Hollyware
Issue Reviewed	August 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

A super-cute platform jobby that constantly astounds, Hoi is a surprise star on the Amiga. Help the 'saur through five bloody huge levels in one of the most smoothly playable games yet. With real gameplay variation this looks set to become a timeless wonder.

Desert Strike

93%



Publisher	Electronic Arts
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

Definitely EA's best Megadrive-to-Amiga conversion yet, DS has you flying a state-of-the-art attack chopper around hostile desert territory. It's a thinking man's shoot-'em-up basically, with excellent graphics and sound and flawless playability. A classic, and actually better than its Megadrive inspiration.

The Legend of Kyrandia

93%



Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

A graphic adventure in the Monkey Island 2 model. As Brandon, your only chance of resuscitating your turned-to-stone Grandad is by defeating the mad jester Malcolm (the best villain to have appeared in an Amiga game yet). Lots of truly gorgeous graphics and an inspired player interface.

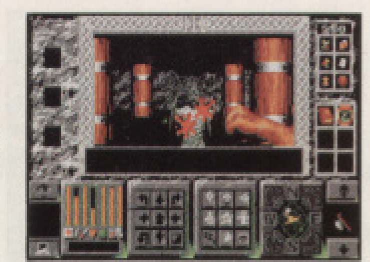
RECOMMENDED

Legends of Valour

92%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

LoV uses an amazing graphics engine to generate the most realistic 3D environment you ever seen! It gives you total freedom of movement in the fantasy gameworld and makes this one of the most atmospheric RPGs yet! Destined to be hailed a classic, you'd be foolish to miss it.



Lemmings 2

91%

Publisher	Pysgnosis
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Oh yes! They're back! Topping what must be THE classic game of the last few years was never going to be easy but DMA Design have done a top job. There are fifty new abilities to learn (some Lems can even fly!) and increased player interacton with the scenery. Just as much fun as the original ever was.



Lionheart

91%

Publisher	Thalion
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

German coders are on a bit of a roll at the moment, what with No Second Prize and now this, a hack-n'-slash platform romp. Boasting some of the most stunning scrolling parallax scenery you've ever seen and tight, addicitve gameplay, this is a terrific title that is an essential part of your software collection.

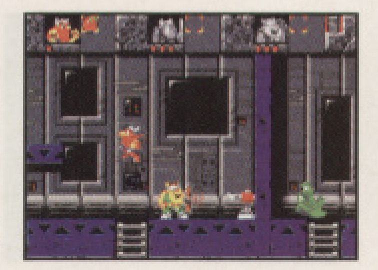


The Lost Vikings

90%

Publisher	Interplay
Issue Reviewed	June 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

The Lost Vikings is an arcade adventure with a premise very similar to Gobliiins', i.e. you have three characters under your control, each of whom have different abilities, and you have to use them in the right order to solve puzzles. Fortunately it's far better than that game. Indeed, it's one of the best this year!

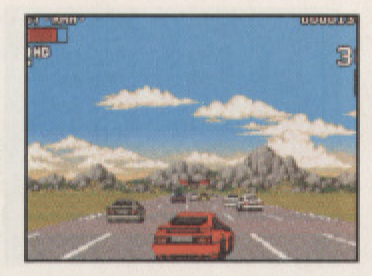


Lotus 3

86%

Publisher	Gremlin
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

The third Lotus instalment mixes the best of the two previous offerings and ends up with a game which will satisfy all. With laps or circuits, a variety of race conditions and an unusual course designer, Gremlin have produced a real winner. You still can't wreck the Lotuses, though!



Lure of the Temptress

90%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	July 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

An impressive debut by Revolution, an English based programming team, Lure improves over the standard graphical adventure by way of its real character interaction. The non-playing characters all go about their own business, chatting to to each other and the like, making this the closest game to real life yet.



McDonalds Land

90%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Yet another attempt to 'do' Mario on the Amiga, this one succeeds thanks to superb playability and some interesting twists on old platforming themes. Of course it's barely got an ounce of originality but who cares when the game's this much fun? Want a great platform game? You got it!

Monkey Island 2

94%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	July 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£37.99

What else is there left to say? The game to end all graphical adventures with genuine humour and gorgeous hand-painted graphics improves in every way over the original (a task in itself). The disk accessing is a trifle too much but the overall package is one of the best you'll ever see on the Amiga.

No Second Prize

91%

Publisher	Thalion
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

NSP is arguably the first bike game to actually make you feel like you're astride a throbbing metal monster. Where it scores most over its predecessors is the ease of control the player has over the bike - it's sheer bliss! Virtually faultless, it ranks alongside such other racing classics as Lotus and F1GP.



Putty

87%

Publisher	System 3
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

A high-flyer in the charts - and deservedly so. Putty is one of the most original games, let alone platform games, to have appeared in a long time. As a tiny little blue blob, the player has to slip, stretch and absorb his way around umpteen gaudy levels, rescuing robots from an evil wizard's minions. Try it - you'll like it!



Risky Woods

84%

Publisher	Electronic Arts
Issue Reviewed	July 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Hey, there are these woods, right, and - they're risky! (Thanks in the main to the legions of the Undead that roam its moonlight-dappled pathways). Yup, we're in horizontal-scrolling slash-'em-up territory here and not a bad one at that, although the scrolling is a touch 'jittery' in places.



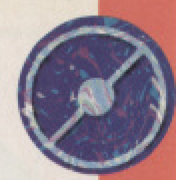
Sensible Soccer V1.1

93%

Publisher	Renegade
Issue Reviewed	June 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Here at The One we don't care what you OR your mates say - Sensisoccer kicks seven bells out of Kick Off 2. Instinctive control and out-and-out addictiveness make it a joy to play, and the improved goalies in this revised version have produced a game that's near flawless!





Shadoworlds

88%

Publisher	Krisalis
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

From the same boys who brought you Shadowlands, Shadoworlds re-employs the Photoscape system to good effect in this Aliens-inspired RPG. The accent's more on action here than the puzzle-orientated Shadowlands and arguably suffers for it - shooting monsters in half-darkness can get annoying at times!

Wing Commander

87%

Publisher	Origin
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

It's the PC-to-Amiga conversion no-one thought we'd ever see, but here it is and it's not half bad. It's got everything the PC version had and is thus just as impressive. Although the 3D can be sluggish at times, the superb feeling of actually taking part in a big space campaign pulls you through the occasional lulls.

Street Fighter 2

89%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	January 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£27.99

Street Fighter 2 on the Amiga isn't half bad at all. It's not as smart as the SNES version, agreed, and die-hard fans of the coin-op may be disappointed by some of the graphical omissions like the lack of parallaxed backgrounds, but there's still no denying that this is one of the Amiga's better beat-'em-ups of late.

Wizkid

92%

Publisher	Ocean
Issue Reviewed	June 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Without a doubt the best game that Ocean has released in a long while, Wizkid also happens to be its most original (all thanks to those crazy funsters at Sensible Software). On the surface it looks like a simple Breakout-inspired arcade game, but there is in fact a wacky arcade adventure lurking beneath. Fun!

Superfrog

93%

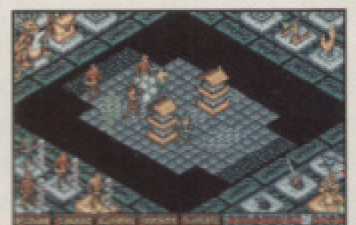


Publisher	Team 17
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£26.99

Forget Zool - this is the real Amiga 'Sonic-beater'. Like all Team 17's games it looks and sounds marvellous, but the gameplay is what really makes the game shine. From the control through the level design to the difficulty, it's all been brilliantly thought-out. You won't have had so much sheer fun in a long time.

Worlds of Legend

89%

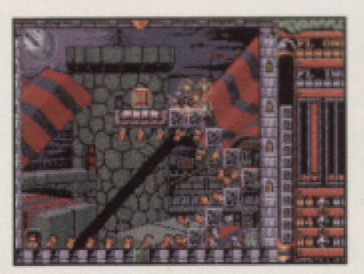


Publisher	Mindscape
Issue Reviewed	June 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

If you missed last year's Legend then you should make for it right now and get this. It's a simply superb RPG which uses a near-identical control system. It's got plenty of action and buckets of atmosphere. If you're the sort of person who normally cringes in horror at the thoughts of RPGs then this will convert you.

Troddlers

85%

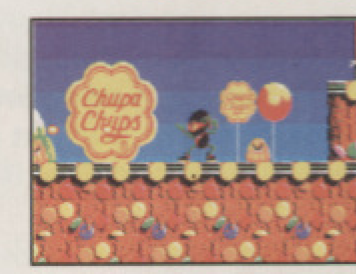


Publisher	Storm
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

A puzzle game which is firmly Lemmings influenced, Troddlers adds to the DMA classic by introducing a number of different level objectives. If anything it owes a little more to Solomen's Key than Lemmings with its emphasis on block manipulation as a means to guiding the Troddlers to the level exit!

Zool

87%





Publisher	Gremlin
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Gremlin certainly cooked up a character to rival even Mario and Sonic in this 'tribute' to the sad consoles. Fast, furious and manic in every way, Zool is a statement to industry that the Amiga can perform as well as the plastic slabs - and better! There's nothing like Zool to impress your mates.

COMPETITION

Ah, the Compo. Here's the place where you can be one of ten people to win a top piece of software for not very much effort. All you have to do is correctly answer the three blummin' easy questions below, stick them on a postcard or a stuck-down envelope and send it to; Recommended Compo 7, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU to arrive here by no later than July 28th. The first ten correct entries we select after the closing date win. It's as easy as that! See you next month.

(1) What Recommended entry features a mad jester called Malcolm?
(2) What is the only problem with Indy Jones IV (Adventure)?
(3) In what issue was The Chaos Engine reviewed?

ONE NEXT MONTH

You've all probably heard the rumours that are circulating around the Amiga community about a brand new CD-based Amiga currently in development. Well, you're not the only ones. But what do you think it will be like? And what do people who have the same names as some of the top stars think? We decided to interview some of them and find out how they feel about the new Amiga.

"Ooh, it's going to be brilliant," said Mike Smith when we rang him up. "I enjoy playing computer games like Zool and Desert Strike and I've also got quite a few CDs so this sounds like the ideal machine for someone like me. How much do you reckon I'll be able to sell my Amiga 500 for? I'll bundle a few original games and an extra joystick. Anyway, I'll have to get on now, I've got a pan of peas on the stove."

Russ Abbott wasn't too sure. "I think Commodore will annoy a few people with this 'un. I recently purchased an A1200 and I certainly don't fancy having to go save up all my dole money for a new machine so soon. And, talking of annoying, that Kelly Sumner riled me back in the February issue with his mightier-than-thou approach! It was all my wife could to do stop me thumping him right on the mush."

Mr C from out of The Shamen didn't know what on earth we were on about. "Got any Veras?" he said.

Someone else who didn't appear to care much for the new Amiga was Paul Daniels. We asked him whether he's interested in Commodore's affairs and he said "Not a lot."

Thankfully, Bruce Forsythe was a little more forthcoming. "I'll be first in line when the release date is announced," he said. "I just hope that Commodore improve the chipset so that the new machine will be able to handle full-motion-video at an acceptable quality - not like that Mega CD thing. Take that Night Trap game - it's so grainy you can't see the lovely young ladies in detail unless you squint really hard. It's doing my eyes in."

Re-using an old Harry Enfield joke and making a complete breast of himself at the same time, Norman Tebbit had only a few words to say. "Ah yes, this is a very important questions and one which I fully intend to answer. But let me tell you this; whatever the new Amiga will be like, it will be a lot better than under the last Labour government."

We were just about to begin searching the phonebook for someone called Madonna when our publisher came back in and told us to get on with some proper work.

If you're wondering what on earth all this has to do with next month's issue then let me explain. We might have some more news on the new Amiga, it all depends whether the rumour is true and if anyone will talk to us about it. In any case, rest assured that there'll be great reviews of Ocean Golf, Hired Guns and maybe even Darkmere, as well as a host of others. And if we can think of any features in time then hopefully you'll find one or two of them in there as well.

Ah well, it looks like that's it for this issue. In a couple of more lines there'll be no more words to read. Don't forget that the August issue (already?) will be on sale July 28th so we'll see you then.

ONE BYE for now!

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